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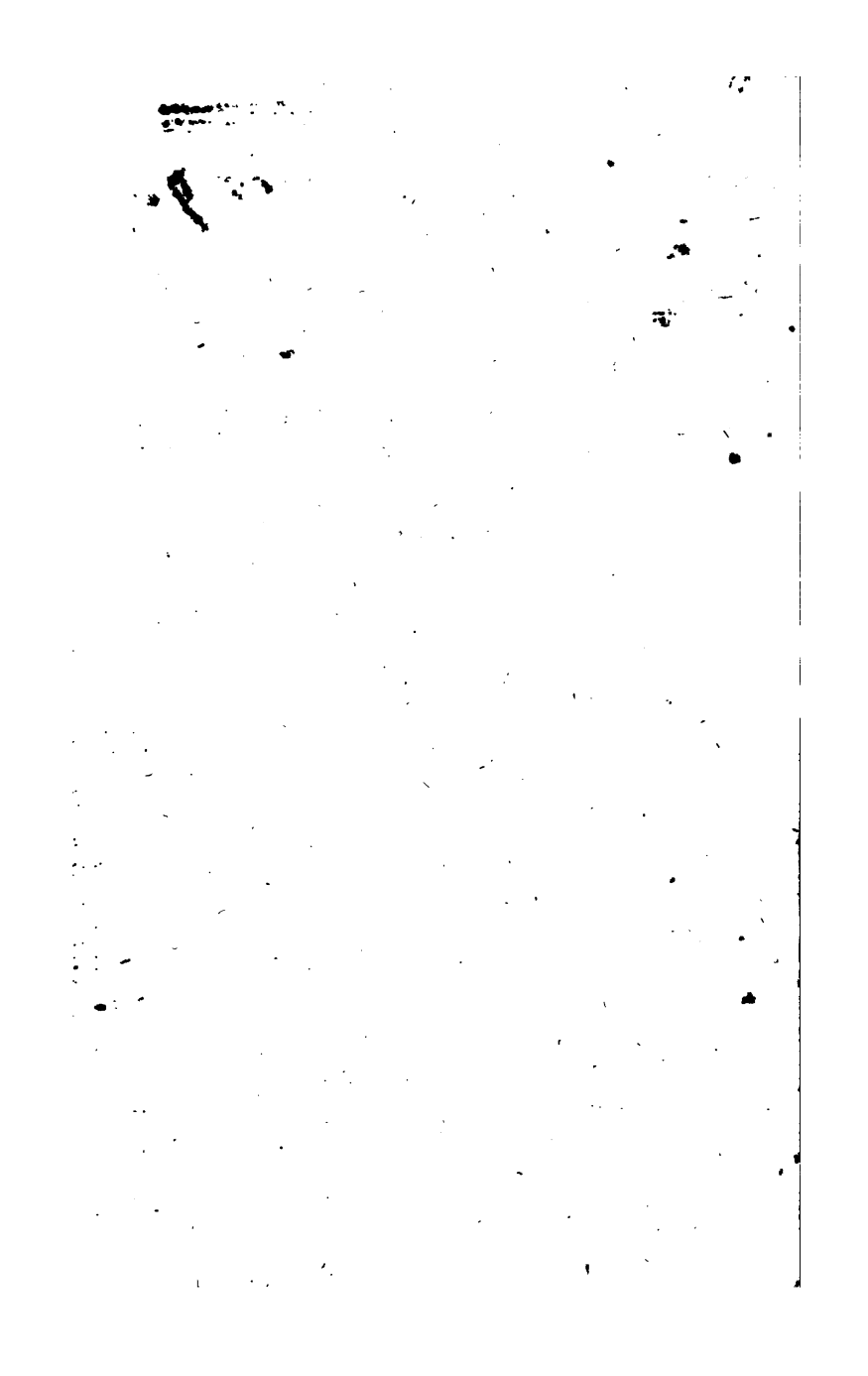


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CHRISTIAN BAPTISM,

AS DELIVERED TO THE

CHURCHES,

BY THE

Evangelists and Apostles,

IN THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

IN A

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Second Edition.

BY THOMAS BALDWIN, D. D.

MINISTER OF THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

REPEATED applications have been made to the writer of the following Letter, since publishing his last work on Baptism, to draw up a brief summary of "Christian Baptism," for the sake of such, as have not leisure to read more lengthy and argumentative discussions of the subject. Yielding to the solicitations of my friends, I consented to attempt to prepare this little Tract, of which notice was given in the last Minutes of the Warren Association.

My first design was to have published my remarks in a different form. But in attempting to write a letter to a particular Friend, I was led to notice the principal facts recorded in the New Testament, which so exactly comported with my previous design, that I concluded to enlarge the Letter, and publish it: Hoping by the blessing of God it may prove useful not only to one, but to thousands.

BOSTON, MARCH 28, 1812.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

My very dear Friend,

KNOWING something of the perplexed state of your mind respecting baptism, I have for a considerable time wished an opportunity to converse freely with you on the subject. But particular circumstances have rendered it improper for me to introduce the subject when at your house: and not knowing whether an opportunity would soon offer to converse with you according to my wishes, I have concluded to address a few lines to you on this interesting concern, not doubting but you will receive them with kindness, and read them with candour.

When I first began to write, I intended nothing more than a private letter to you; but finding it impossible to lay before you a fair statement of Christian Baptism, as given us by the Evangelists and Apostles of our blessed Lord, without exceeding the limits of an ordinary letter; and believing that others might be profited as well as you, I have now concluded to transcribe and publish it.

I am encouraged to hope, that by the blessing of God, these friendly remarks may prove beneficial to you, and that you may hereby be enabled to discern with clearness and satisfaction, what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; and what the Lord Jesus requires of you in order to keep his commandments.

I need not tell you, *my dear Friend*, how much I have felt interested in your eternal welfare. I trust you have not been insensible of it. Nor will you wonder, that I should feel a deep solicitude, that you may not mistake the right way, but be led by the *footsteps of the flock*: Always remembering that Christ, the good Shepherd, "callet^h his sheep by name, and *leadeth them out*: and when he putteth forth his own sheep he *goeth before them*, and they follow *him*: for *they know* his voice." JOHN x. 3, 4.

I have no doubt but you earnestly desire to know what is right, and to act in such a manner, as to *answer a good conscience towards God*. In order to this, you must make his holy word, the rule of your conduct. We have little difficulty in complying with the will of Christ, whenever we feel the temper of that holy apostle, who could say, "*What things were gain to me, (enumerating all his Jewish privileges,) those I counted loss for Christ.*" PHIL. III. 7. It is then, and then only, that we are willing to follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth.

I have now only to request, that with prayerful attention, and without prejudice or prepossession, you will examine the following remarks; carefully comparing them with those parts of the sacred scriptures on which they are predicated.

It is a point, I believe, admitted by christians of all denominations, that believers are proper subjects of Baptism. The dispute between us and others, is, whether *believers* are the *only proper subjects* of this ordinance. I freely confess, I have never been able to find but one kind of subjects, described in the New Testament. The language appears exceedingly plain and simple, and the practice of the first christians is in perfect accordance with it. *Confession* of sin, *fruits* of repentance, and *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ; or, in other words, believing with all the heart, were uniformly required, as qualifications for baptism: And we read of no instance, where any were ever admitted without them. In order, howev-

er, to satisfy you, that my statement is correct, I shall proceed to lay before you, a brief history of this institution, as it is given to us in the sacred Oracles.

As the ordinance of baptism is never mentioned in the Old Testament, nor was ever practised under that dispensation, * all our knowledge respecting it, must be derived from the New. My present design is, to follow the Evangelists and Apostles, and place before you, in a connected view, a faithful account of "Christian Baptism," as delivered to us in the writings of Christ and his apostles.

The first account of the baptismal institution, is in the third chapter of Matthew. Here John's ministry is introduced, as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." And "There went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." MATT. III. 4, 6.

Two things are here to be observed.

1. John baptized none, but such as made confession of their sins.

2. John did not baptize *by, from, nor with* Jordan, but *IN* Jordan. It is difficult to conceive for what purpose he should go down into Jordan, unless to immerse his candidates.

Among others, many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to John to be baptized, but exhibiting no evidence of repentance towards God, or faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, he addressed them in the most faithful and solemn manner, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father." MATT. III. 8, 9.

But is not this the very ground on which it is attempted to support infant baptism? Most certainly; for this is the main pillar which supports the whole fabrick; yet John rejected it as totally invalid. Did he not act correctly? And if so, does not this decide the

* The scriptures know nothing of the baptism of proselytes.

point forever, that children cannot be admitted upon the faith of their parents? But it will probably be said, these were not children, but men, grown to years of understanding, and, therefore, capable of acting for themselves. This will be admitted; but still we ask, were they not as really children of Abraham now, as when but eight days old? If the covenant made with Abraham did not secure for his natural seed a right to baptism without their personally exhibiting the *fruits of repentance*, how can it secure to the seed of Gentile believers the same right while impenitent? Let us for a moment change the position, and suppose that these Pharisees had by some means failed of circumcision in their infancy, and had now requested to receive that rite on the same plea, i. e. that Abraham was their father; would they, or could they have been rejected? Let candour answer. If this remark be duly considered, we should suppose it must convince every person desirous of finding the truth, that circumcision and baptism are distinct in their nature and design; and that a scriptural qualification for one, furnishes no claim for the other.

The baptism of the Saviour, is the next instance recorded in this chapter.

VERSES 14—17. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, It is I that have need to be baptized of thee, and thou comest to me! Jesus answered and said unto him, permit this at present: for thus ought we to ratify every institution. Then John acquiesced.* And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water," &c.

I imagine I hear my *Friend* saying, "I really think that Jesus was baptized by immersion." And will not this explicit example of our condescending Redeemer, weigh more with a conscientious believer, than a thousand mere probabilities? I confess it does with me, notwithstanding all the attempts which have

* Dr. Campbell's Translation.

been made, to prove that Christ's baptism is "not to be imitated by christians."

Mark and Luke mention the same things which we have noticed above. MARK 4: 5-11. LUKE 11: 7-9, 21, 22. But as these accounts agree in substance with the foregoing, it is deemed unnecessary particularly to notice them.

There are some things mentioned by John, which are not recorded by the other Evangelists: particularly the following. "After these things, (saith he,) came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized: for John was not yet cast into prison." "*And they came and were baptized.*" Who? The people, say some, who attended on John's ministry. But is it not more natural to suppose, that it means the disciples of Christ? We have a previous account of *his* baptism, but not of theirs. The word *Disciples*, seems to be the antecedent to the pronoun "they." But whether this were the case or not, the passage affords abundant proof, that John's baptism belonged to the gospel dispensation; and as such, ought to be considered as gospel baptism: unless for the sake of getting clear of the difficulty, it should be asserted, that Christ and his disciples were also ministers of the legal dispensation; for both John and Christ, with his disciples, were baptizing at the same time, and in the same neighbourhood.

In order to prove that John's baptism was under the law, it should first be proved, that the law required such a service. But where can such a requirement be found? The answer is, no where. We therefore take it as we find it recorded by Mark, That John's preaching and baptism were the *beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ*. MARK 1: 1.

In the beginning of the 4th chapter of John, it is said, "When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made and baptized

more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea," &c. It hence appears, that they first *made* disciples, and then baptized them. They did not baptize them in order to make them disciples, either now, or at some future period. The account here given serves also to show the fallacy of those who argue the baptism of infants from Christ's taking little children into his arms and blessing them. Jesus blessed them; but he baptized not, himself, but *his* disciples. That instance was evidently novel, or the disciples would not have opposed it.

The next thing to be noted, is, the great commission given by Christ to his apostles. "Go ye, therefore, into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." **MATT. XXVIII. 19, 20. MARK XVI. 15, 16.** It is here to be noted, that they were first to preach the gospel, and then to baptize such as gave evidence that they had received it. They had no direction to baptize any but such as professed to be believers. Matthew says, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father," &c. It is hence argued by some of our Pedobaptist brethren, that as infants are a part of all nations, therefore the commission authorises their baptism. But if the commission is not limited to such as are taught, and so taught as to believe, then adults must be baptized as well as infants: for they too are a part of all nations. But both are inadmissible. Baptism is declared, by an apostle, to be the answer of a good conscience towards God. **1 PET. III. 21.** It is impossible to conceive, that an infant, or indeed, any other person than a believer, should answer a good conscience towards God; in being baptized.

Let us now follow the disciples, and we shall soon see how they understood their Lord's commission.

On the memorable day of Pentecost, when the apostles, according to Christ's promise, were *baptized*

with the Holy Ghost and fire*; and while the astonished multitude were many of them pricked in the heart, and crying, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* Peter, under this divine energy, addressed them, saying, *"Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."* ACTS II. 38, 39. Here observe, Peter did not exhort them to be baptized, and then repent at some future period; nor does he make any promise to them, but what are connected with repentance. The promise mentioned in the 39th verse, I am inclined to think, either referred to the gift of the Holy Ghost, mentioned in the preceding verse; or to the ancient promise made to Abraham, *"In thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed."* GEN. XII. 3. *Which SEED was Christ.* GAL. III. 16. Although the apostle seems to be very general in urging this promise as an encouragement, yet he is particularly careful to limit its blessings, *to as many as the Lord our God shall call.* These, whether old or young, whether Jews that were nigh, or Gentiles afar off, should be alike blessed; provided the Lord should call them by his grace, and make them willing in the day of his power.

There is a very obvious reason, for the apostle's noticing children in the above connection. He was now addressing the men, who, *with wicked hands*, had been guilty of crucifying Jesus. And it will be remembered, that they had imprecated his blood, that is, the guilt of it, upon themselves and *their children*, when Pilate sought to release him. In order, therefore, to remove every discouragement which might arise from the above imprecation, he assured them, that the promise was to all that the Lord our God shall call. 47

* Dr. Campbell renders the preposition *in* water, and *in* the Holy Ghost, and fire. MATT. III. 11.

As further proof of the correctness of this statement, permit me to invite your attention to the subsequent part of this account. VERSE 41.—“Then they that *gladly received his word* were baptized.” Is it possible to believe, that there were any infants, or unconverted children included in this account? Is there not abundant evidence to the contrary? The candidates are said not only to have received the word, but to have “received it *gladly*.” That is, with the whole heart and soul. “And the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls.” Here we have further evidence that none of this number were infants; for those who baptize infants, do not add them to the church, nor consider, or treat them as church members. But what follows, will, as we should suppose, put it beyond all reasonable dispute. VERSE 42.—“And they continued stedfastly in the apostle’s doctrine, and fellowship; and in breaking of bread and in prayers.” Surely this could not be the work of mere babes. Read to the end of the chapter, and you will find, that every word goes to prove, that the 3000 who were baptized, were adults, and not children who were incapable of knowing any thing about the gospel.

We meet with nothing more on the subject, until we come to the 8th chapter. Here we are told, that “Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them,—and there was great joy in that city.” The preaching of Christ faithfully has usually produced this effect. At the 12th verse it is said, “When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. No mention is made of children; the conclusion is irresistible,—that there were none baptized. The probable reason is assigned in the text. They believed what Philip preached concerning the kingdom of God; that it was to be composed of believers only. The time was now come, when God’s house was to be built of lively stones: so that it might be a spiritual

house, capable of offering up spiritual sacrifices to God by Jesus Christ. 1 PET. ii.

In this same chapter, we have an account of the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch. When he proposed himself as a candidate, Philip replied to him, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." But can any reason be assigned, why Philip should require such a confession of faith from the Eunuch, and baptize others without any confession at all, which he must have done, provided he baptized infants? Can you, my Friend, believe him guilty of such inconsistency? I am persuaded you cannot. But this account is highly interesting to us in another point of light. It shows, beyond a reasonable doubt, the mode of baptism, if we may so speak. When the Eunuch had declared his faith in Jesus, as "the Son of God," — *they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him.* And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. Thousands of others have travelled the same delightful road, and found their joys the same.

The foregoing passage is so decidedly in favour of immersion, and bears such a manifest resemblance to the baptism of Jesus, that those who endeavour to maintain a different practice, have always appeared to be extremely embarrassed to know how to dispose of it with any tolerable plausibility.

Sometimes recourse is had to Greek prepositions; and we are told, that going *down into*, means no more than going down "unto;" that is, to the water's edge: and that coming *up out* of the water, should be rendered coming up "from" the water.

A late author has given us a new exposition, i. e. that "*into Jordan*, means any where within the banks of the river." In reply to what is said, Mark i. 5, that John baptized in the river of Jordan, he says, "he might be *in the midst of Jordan*, and not be in the water!" And all this is proved to demonstration,

from Joshua iii. 17, &c. where we have the account of the priests' bearing the Ark into the midst of Jordan; and that the waters were parted, so that the people passed over on dry ground. This, it will be acknowledged, was one of those astonishing miracles which God wrought, in carrying the tribes of Israel to the promised land. So, in like manner, if John could for a moment stand in the *midst* of Jordan upon dry land, it must have been by a miracle; but to suppose this, during the whole of his baptizing, must have been to suppose a miracle much more astonishing than that wrought for the Israelites. But it should be remembered, that *John did no miracle*: that is, no miracle attended his administration. What credit ought to be given to the reasonings of a man, who has recourse to such absurdities, the public will judge.*

Again, It is sometimes argued, that they had nothing to carry water in. Admitting this to be true, (which, however, is not at all probable,) if no more was necessary than for Philip to wet his fingers and put them on the Eunuch's forehead, surely they needed not both to have gone down into the water for this? But, if the Eunuch was to be immersed, this was absolutely necessary. It could not be decently performed without. Let precisely such an account be given of a baptizing at the present day, and there is not a person of any denomination who would hesitate a moment, in determining to what denomination of christians they belonged. It must be a peculiar satisfaction to know, that our practice so perfectly resembles that of the primitive christians, as not to be distinguished from it. Or, in other words, that in describing theirs, we identify our own. If there be a doubt upon the mind of any in what manner we ought to be baptized, it will be always safe to follow the example here given us, of apostolic practice. Practising as they did, we can-

* See Cat. on Baptism, page 4.

not be wrong ; but in differing from them we are liable to err.*

In the 10th of Acts we have the account of Peter's being called to the house of Cornelius ; of his preaching, and of the wonderful effects of the gospel upon this assembly of Gentiles. In this discourse the apostle gave a brief account of the character, preaching, miracles, life, death, and resurrection of Christ. " While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word." Perceiving

* The public have lately been entertained with a work from the pen of the Rev. Reuben Emerson, A. M. which he calls a " Catechism ; exhibiting in a plain and concise manner, the scripture account of baptism." The Author has enriched his work with a considerable number of *plates*, so that the eyes of his " common readers," as well as their intellects, may assist them in understanding his subject. But after all, we think that some of them must be exceedingly puzzled : for he has unfortunately represented the act of baptizing in a manner, which, we believe, neither he nor any other person ever saw performed. The first plate represents Christ and John standing in the water ankle deep. The Saviour stooping forward, and John pouring water copiously upon the back of the head or neck ! A similar description is given of Philip and the Eunuch, and several others, excepting that they are all standing safe on dry land. The author, it seems, perceived his unhappy blunder, of pouring water on the *back of the head*, before his book had got wholly through the press. But in correcting the error, he is equally unfortunate. He has still represented baptism in a light as completely at variance with his own practice, as it is with apostolic baptism. In representing the baptism of the jailor, he presents the administrator, standing with a large waterpot by him ; the jailor standing erect before him, and the water trickling from his nose and chin. But the plate, after all, appears extremely deficient to answer his purpose. Why had he not thought to have placed a babe in the mother's arms advancing to receive baptism ? He might have done it as well as not. As he has presented none but adults, his " common readers" may, after all, be led to doubt whether any others were baptized. But all his fanciful representations look extremely unlike any thing we have ever seen practised among Pedobaptists. This reminds us of a guide-post, that directs the traveller in a way which it never goes itself.

this, the apostle asked, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" i. e. Can any of my Jewish brethren object to the baptism of these Gentile converts, seeing God has owned them by giving them the Holy Ghost? But here is not a single word about the baptism of any, whether old or young, who had not received the Holy Ghost. This is mentioned as the ground on which their claim rested.

The planting of the church at Corinth perfectly accords with the preceding. It proceeds as follows, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." ACTS XVIII. 8. Not a word do we find as yet of the baptism of infants.

But there are two or three households mentioned, is it not likely there were some infants in them? These certainly bid fairest to furnish the desired information. It will be remembered; however, that we have just mentioned one household, which, we are informed, were all believers, and therefore not infants. Although nothing directly is said of their baptism, unless they are included with the other Corinthians.

The next account of baptism, is the jailor and his family. This man, it appears, had in his custody Paul and Silas, whom he had put into the inner prison, and secured in the stocks. At midnight, they prayed and sung praises. God heard them, and answered their prayers by an extraordinary earthquake, which opened all the prison doors. The affrighted jailor, waking out of sleep, and finding the doors all open, and supposing the prisoners had availed themselves of this opportunity to escape, drew out his sword with a view to kill himself. Paul prevented him, by declaring that the prisoners were all quiet. The jailor, convicted in his own conscience by the Spirit of God, fell at the feet of Paul and Silas, and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and all thy house:" That is, thy household

also, if they believe, shall be saved : for no one will suppose that the jailor's family could be saved in unbelief, any more than others. The account proceeds, " And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to *all* that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed (not baptized) their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straight-way. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, *believing in God with all his house.*" If this passage were not specially wanted to countenance infant baptism, no one would dispute this household's being all believers any more than they would the household of Crispus, mentioned above. The whole account, without the least torturing, is in perfect agreement with our views of gospel order. The word was first spoken to the jailor and to all in his house. It is said, he believed in God with all his house, and they were all baptized. They were all fit subjects of the ordinance according to our sentiments. I should rejoice to baptize such households at any time.

Our Pædobaptist brethren suppose there were infants in the jailor's household, and reason from this supposition as though it were an admitted fact. But on what ground is this supposition supported ? I know not, unless it be on this, that it is common in some families to have infants. Hence they suppose there were some here. I suppose there were none ; and have been brought to this conclusion from the following reasons. 1. There are none mentioned : this alone is sufficient to destroy any supposition to the contrary. 2. The apostle spake the word to all that were in the house : it is highly improbable that any would be collected on this midnight occasion who were incapable of understanding the word. 3. It is expressly said he believed in God with all his house. No piece of sacred history, without special management, would look with more forbidding aspect upon infant baptism than this. The pains that have been taken to render this passage subservient to the baptism of unbelievers, must excite a strong suspicion that its

advocates are hardly pushed, and that they find the scriptures exceedingly barren of any positive proof of the point.

In the same chapter we have an account of the conversion and baptism of Lydia. The subject is treated with great brevity; yet the incidents related are sufficient to direct us in forming a correct judgment of the transaction.

On the Sabbath day, Paul and his companions went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; probably to a *Proseucha*, or place where devout people collected for prayer. Here he spake to the women that resorted thither. *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptised, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us.* ACTS XVI. 13, 14. But what is there here to support infant baptism? Nothing more than merely that a *household* is mentioned. But neither husband nor children make any part of the account. Who Lydia's household were we are left to conjecture, excepting that it is said in the 40th verse: "And they went out of the prison, (that is, Paul and Silas,) and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." There is the greatest reason to conclude, that these were the persons baptised with Lydia, and probably, persons in her employ. This appears the more probable, as she is represented as still belonging to Thyatira, but who was led by her commercial concerns, to reside a part of her time at least, in the city of Philippi. Further the scripture saith not.

I have designedly omitted giving any particular account of the baptism of Paul; because no one disputes his being a real convert at the time of his baptism; and as no one was baptised with him, it is

impossible that it should afford any pretence for infant baptism. Nor do I conceive that any argument can be drawn from what is mentioned in the 19th of Acts, respecting some of John's disciples, with whom Paul met at Ephesus. Whether these were re-baptized or not, does not affect the argument, either as it respects the subjects or mode. They are said to be men, and not babes. The question respecting them was not whether they were *believers*, or whether they had been *properly baptized*; but whether they had *received the Holy Ghost since they believed*!

I have now, my dear Friend, placed before you all the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament, during the ministry of Christ and his apostles; a space of nearly thirty years. And not a single instance is to be found in this whole history, of the baptism of an infant. Had these apostles been of the same sentiments of our Pædobaptist brethren, would they not, in giving an account of their planting churches, and frequently baptizing, have somewhere mentioned children? To me, it is morally certain that they would. To satisfy you, however, that I have some reason for this opinion, you will permit me to introduce two or three extracts from their journals; and you will then see whether they agree with those given by the apostles, which we have been considering.

My first extract shall be from the journal of the late Rev. David Brainerd. It is as follows:—"Lord's day, July 21, 1745, I baptized my interpreter, and wife. July 26, baptized my interpreter's children. —Lord's day, Nov. 3, I baptized 14 persons of the Indians, 6 adults, and 8 children. Nov. 4, baptized a child this day. —I have now baptized 47 persons of the Indians, 23 adults, and 24 children." Thus far Mr. Brainerd. Had we found any thing like this in the Acts of the Apostles, the dispute would be at an end.

I will now present you with an extract of a later date. This I take from a communication made to the Congregational Massachusetts Missionary Society. It is dated Haverhill, Oct. 29, 1804. "Yesterday I

returned home from my mission to the new settlements, in the North Western parts of the State of New York; have been out upward of 17 weeks: during which time, I rode 1820 miles, preached 88 sermons, administered the Lord's supper 5 times, baptized 35 children," &c.* These may serve as a general specimen of their journals.

We should suppose it impossible, for any one to compare these accounts with those given by the apostles, and not be struck with the manifest difference between them. If both parties proceeded alike, how can this difference be accounted for? Or, if indeed the apostles baptized children, what possible reason can be assigned for their neglecting ever to mention it? Is not the very supposition of such neglect an impeachment of their integrity? Especially, as they were appointed by Christ, to plant churches, and set in order the things that were wanting; and as their conduct in this respect was to be considered as a model for all succeeding ages?

But if there be no mention of infant baptism in the scriptures, you will ask, why is it then practised? And on what ground do any attempt to defend it? I answer, they infer it from what is called in the New Testament the *covenant of circumcision*.† This covenant is found at large in the 17th chapter of Genesis. By this covenant, Abraham was commanded to circumcise himself when he was 99 years old; and also to circumcise all the males of his house, without any regard to their moral or religious characters.‡ The extent of this requirement may be seen in the words following. VERSES 11, 12, 13, 14.—“*And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child of your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger,*

* Mass. Miss. Magazine, pages 245, 246. † Acts vii. 8.

‡ Isaac, the heir of promise, was not yet born.

which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised : and my covenant shall be in your flesh, for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people ; he hath broken my covenant." I have given you, *my dear Friend*, this complete view, of the covenant made with Abraham, in order that you may examine it, and see if you can possibly make out from it, a command of Jesus Christ to baptize either infants or adults. As strange, as it may appear, this is the very ground on which infant baptism rests.

If this assertion needed proof, I have only to request you to turn to Dr. Spring's charge delivered to the young gentlemen lately ordained at Salem ; and you will see the sentiment in its entire form. Addressing these missionaries, he says, " If God shall succeed and bless your labours of love among the heathen, in multiplying hopeful converts, you will establish churches, break to them the bread of life, and apply the seals of the covenant to THE CHILDREN AND DOMESTICS of believers, agreeably to the PRACTICE OF ABRAHAM the father of the faithful, and the subsequent friends of truth, who tread in his steps."* This is carrying the subject completely to its source. Abraham's circumcising Ishmael and his servants, and not the command of Jesus Christ, is the ground on which these young missionaries are sent to India, to baptize the *children* and *domestics* of Hindoo converts ! As by the very terms of the charge, these children and domestics are not supposed to be believers, I would seriously ask, in what light they are to be looked upon when baptized ? Are they in consequence of this act to be considered as christians, or only as baptized pagans ? They will doubtless belong to one or the other of these classes.

If any thing like the above paragraph in Dr. Spring's charge, can be found in the Saviour's direc-

tions to his disciples, or in Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, or indeed in any other part of the New Testament, then will we acknowledge the sentiment to be correct. But if neither Christ, nor his apostles have ever delivered any such sentiment, we conclude, that every inquiring, conscientious christian, will be justified in rejecting it.

We should rather think the Doctor had imposed a very difficult task upon his young friends, in order to keep his charge. For although Hindoo babes can make no more resistance than other babes, yet we should think it quite likely, that their old, sturdy domestics, might not be so willing to resign *cast*, merely because their masters had seen fit to change their religion.

It is not because Christ has given no command to baptize, that this provision in the covenant of circumcision is recurred to; for on this subject, his directions are clear and decisive. But, probably, the New Testament institution is thought to be less propitious to babes, as they are not named in Christ's commission, nor, as we believe, included.

Our Pædobaptist brethren tell us, the church is still under this Abrahamic covenant; and therefore, children ought to have the seal applied to them: and that baptism now seals the same covenant, which was formerly sealed by circumcision. But when we demand the authority, by which they make this alteration, we get no direct answer. Sometimes we are told, that Christ's taking little children into his arms, and blessing them, and saying *of such is the kingdom of heaven*, was recognizing their covenant right to baptism: but it has been shown with so much clearness, that Christ did not baptize them, nor say a word about their baptism, that this is now pretty generally given up. The plea most depended upon, is, that they once had a right to the seal of the covenant, and this right, say they, has never been abrogated; therefore, they ought now to be baptized.

But is not this reasoning at a very extraordinary rate! To argue, that a command to *circumcise*, is a

command to baptize, is a mode of reasoning never applied to any other case. But this is not all ; that law was explicit. *Thou shalt circumcise every MAN-CHILD, born in thy house, or bought with thy money.* But does this authorise the baptism of both males and females ? A very extraordinary conclusion indeed ! Furthermore, that law required that the child should be circumcised on the *eighth day*. It could not lawfully be done before, nor might it be omitted on any pretence whatever, where it was possible. But our brethren will baptize either sex, on the very day they are born ; or, without the least consciousness of blame, omit it until weeks afterwards. What authority can we suppose a law to have, which is capable of such management ? Has the all-wise Lawgiver left such a discretionary power to his creatures, as thus to change and alter his positive institutions, to suit their own convenience ?

That these two institutions are totally distinct, and not at all dependent upon each other, the scriptures furnish, to my mind, the most clear and satisfactory evidence. It would not comport with my present design, to enter into a lengthy discussion of the subject. I shall therefore content myself, with only adducing two or three facts recorded by the apostles, which have served fully to confirm my mind in the foregoing statement ; and I doubt not, if you examine them with candour, they will appear to you in the same light.

Permit me then, my dear friend, to request you to read with care, the 15th chapter of Acts. Here you will perceive, that a young church had been gathered at Antioch, chiefly composed of Gentile converts. Probably for a time they enjoyed peace ; “ but certain men which went down from Judea, taught the brethren, and said, except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.” This introduced a very serious difficulty. After labouring without effect, to adjust the matter, it was finally determined, that Paul and Barnabas should go up to

Jerusalem, and refer the question to the apostles and elders ; and obtain their opinion upon the subject.

When the council had come together, the delegates from the church at Antioch, gave a particular account of the good word of God which had been in that city, and of the difficulties introduced among them by the brethren from Judea. The question, as stated by Paul and Barnabas, occasioned considerable disputing among the apostles and elders. But we have only a part of what was offered by Peter and James, together with the final result, handed down to us.

In speaking to the case, Peter observed, that God had given the same spirit to these Gentile converts, as unto them ; “ and put no difference, (saith he) between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” Evidently disapproving of the conduct of his Jewish brethren, he adds : “ Now therefore why tempt ye God, to PUT A YOKE upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear ?” Here we also see, in what light this apostle viewed circumcision : i. e., as an insupportable yoke.

After some observations made by Paul and Barnabas, in confirmation of what Peter had said, James spoke to the same effect. In the course of his remarks he observed, that what had taken place at Antioch, was but the fulfilment of what the prophets had said respecting the conversion of the Gentiles ; and concluded by offering the following motion : “ Wherefore, my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles have turned unto God ; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.” This motion was adopted by the council ; and chosen brethren sent with Paul and Barnabas to confirm the same things by mouth.

Thus by the unanimous voice of a council, comprising most, if not all the apostles and elders of the whole christian church, and by the approbation of the

"HOLY GHOST," we see *circumcision put down*, and *no SUBSTITUTE proposed in its room* ! In this whole account there is not the most distant hint, that baptism was to be practised in the room of circumcision ! If these apostles and elders had understood the subject as our Pædobaptist brethren do, is it not perfectly unaccountable, that they should not have mentioned it on this perplexing occasion ? To me, I confess, the supposition is too unreasonable to be admitted.—Had they but simply made the statement which our brethren constantly make in arguing with us, it would at once have put an end to the dispute in that church, and have prevented any on the subject in future ; for we all consent to submit to apostolic decision.

In the 21st chapter of the Acts, there is a case stated still plainer, if possible, than the one we have been considering, (see verses 18—22,) when Paul made his last visit to Jerusalem. The day after his arrival, he went in unto James, and all the elders were present. Before these, he rehearsed what wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles, by his ministry. "And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord." But one of them immediately remarked, "*Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of the Jews there are which believe ; and they are all zealous of the law : and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying, they ought NOT TO CIRCUMCISE THEIR CHILDREN.*" Here the question concerning circumcision is again brought directly to view, and Paul is charged with teaching his Jewish converts to neglect it ; but in case he had taught them to baptize their children in its room, was he not called upon, in the most imperious manner, to have declared it in self-defence ? Let any candid person, that is willing to undertake, give a fair answer to this question. If there ever was an occasion which required such a statement, it was the present. The total silence of the apostle on the subject, when he was thus pressed by his Jewish brethren, is irresistible proof to

my mind, that no such practice was then in existence.

I will here take the liberty to state a plain case, and leave it to the consciences of all who read it to answer. Should the missionaries which have lately gone from this country to India, be happily instrumental of the conversion of a number of Jews in that quarter of the world ; and should these Jews manifest a willingness to be baptized themselves, but should insist, like those above noticed, upon continuing circumcision to their children, according to the immemorial usages of their ancestors : I appeal to our Pædobaptist brethren to decide, whether these young ministers would not, at once, revolt at the idea ; and tell them plainly, that circumcision was done away with the other rites of the ceremonial law ; and that baptism was now to be practised in its room. In case these converts should persist in their determination, would they not be likely, to repeat to them, what the apostle said to the Galatians : “ Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” GAL. V. 2.

Considering these rites distinct, as these believing Jews undoubtedly did ; and there is nothing unnatural in the supposition, that they should still insist upon circumcising their children according to the custom of their ancestors : while at the same time, they would willingly be baptized themselves in conformity to the laws of the new dispensation. But to admit the argument of our brethren, would prove them still to be Jews, and not christians.

If Paul taught and practised, as our Pædobaptist brethren do, we must suppose, that wherever he carried the gospel, he carried infant-baptism. And hence, if any objected to his neglecting circumcision, he had only to inform them that he practised baptism in its room, and the objection must cease. In this case, I imagine, he would have made some such declaration as the following, to the above charge. “ It is true, my brethren, as you have heard, that I teach such as receive the gospel under my ministry,

not to circumcise their children, as you well know that that rite is superseded by baptism; and as the latter is applied to children as well as the former, it would be highly absurd to teach them to observe both." Would not this plain statement have removed every objection which they urged? Can any man in his sober senses believe, that he would not have made a declaration to this amount, had he known the fact?

The objection against Paul for neglecting to initiate children into the covenant, is the same in substance, as that which is made against the Baptists at the present day. Nor do we perceive that he was able to give a more satisfactory answer to those who objected, than we are: but if he had administered the seal in another form, he would have had greatly the advantage of us.

I have now, my dear Friend, laid before you all the direct testimony which the New Testament furnishes concerning baptism. I have also stated some of my reasons, for not believing that infant baptism was practised by the apostles.

I cannot but hope, that what I have written will be satisfactory to your mind, and serve to establish you in the truth; but should it not have this effect, I shall only regret, that either I have failed in representing this christian ordinance with sufficient clearness, or that the prejudices of education have prevented you from seeing it, in its original purity.

From what has now been offered, the following observations may fairly be deduced, viz.

1. It is evident that a great proportion of the first Jewish converts, continued to practise circumcision. This appears from the two preceding statements from the 15th and 21st chapters of Acts.

2. As they continued to circumcise their children, it is morally certain they did not baptize them at the same time; and as a *seal* of the same covenant.

3. If baptism has taken the place of circumcision, and signifies the same thing, and seals the same covenant; then there must have been the same im-

propriety in baptizing upon a profession of faith; any who had been the subjects of that rite; as there now is, in administering the ordinance to those, who have been baptized in their infancy.

4. If our Pædobaptist brethren state the subject fairly, that *infant-baptism* exactly answers to *infant-circumcision*, and the apostles acted consistently in baptizing such as professed their faith in Christ without any regard to circumcision, then the Baptists act consistently in baptizing on a profession of faith, such as have been baptized in infancy. The same arguments that will vindicate the apostles from the charge of inconsistency, will vindicate us.

5. If it be a duty to baptize infants, it must be so because it is commanded; if not commanded, for that very reason it ought not to be practised. But where, we ask, is there any such command? If in the Bible, we can only say, we have never been able to discover it: nor have we found any person who could point it out to us.

6. But it is often said, "although there may be no express command to baptize infants, yet surely there can be no harm in thus publicly dedicating our offspring to God." This is a very incorrect sentiment, and attended with consequences dishonourable to God, and highly injurious to the happiness of believers.

To pretend to practise as a *divine institution*, what God has not commanded, is no less than to dictate to the Almighty, and implicitly to impeach his wisdom and goodness.—*He that reproveth God, let him answer it.*

It is injurious in its consequences; in that, besides (as we have reason to fear,) leading too many to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, as standing in a covenant relation to God, and therefore less exposed to the divine displeasure than other sinners; it keeps thousands of real christians from obeying the divine command,—to *repent and be*

*baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ.** A vast number of truly godly persons are often exceedingly tried on this point ; and are frequently heard to say, "If I had not been baptized in my infancy, I should have no doubts with respect to my present duty." Thus many are forever prevented the pleasure of *knowing* that they obey Christ, or of following him in his precious example.

The idea of our "recognizing," (as it is called,) our baptism, or of taking upon ourselves what we are told our parents did for us in the moments of unconscious infancy, is a service wholly unknown in the Bible ; and stands upon the same footing of sponsors, godfathers, godmothers, &c.

Although the preceding remarks, if admitted, will go to invalidate the practice of our Pædobaptist brethren ; yet, I am sure you will not judge me to be wanting in christian affection to such of them as truly love the Lord. I can say in the sincerity of my heart, and I believe I speak the language of my brethren, that I truly regard all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. Being agreed with many of them in the great and fundamental doctrines of the gospel, it has ever been my wish, *as far as we are agreed*, to unite in the common cause of our glorious Redeemer. But if they choose still to keep us at a distance, and treat us as an heretical sect, merely because we cannot admit to the Lord's table such as *to us* are unbaptized ; we can only regret, that our views are no more in unison with each other. May the Lord help us all to examine ourselves, and see where the blame lies.

Perhaps, after all, it will be said, that other denominations will admit the Baptists to their communion, and why cannot you admit them to yours ? The cases are by no means similar. For although *they* may be baptized to themselves, or in their own view, they are not so to us. On the other hand, we are not only

baptized in our own view, but in theirs also, themselves being judges.*

Should the period ever arrive, (and I pray God to hasten it,) when the truly pious of both denominations shall cordially unite; when difference of opinion on *one* point only, shall not prevent our union in all others, then shall we be one in the most important sense. On this ground we have long extended the hand of friendship: but to go further we dare not, while we remember that our Lord has said, *He that loveth father or mother more than me; is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* MATT. X. 37, 38.

I have now gone through with what I intended, in exhibiting a plain statement of "christian baptism" from the New Testament. I have designedly omitted those passages in which the words *baptize* and *baptism* are used in a figurative sense; not because I think they have any unfavourable bearing on our sentiments, for I think quite the reverse; but because I think them not very material to the argument, although their weight may be all cast into the right scale.

Those who undertake to deny, that immersion was universally practised by the whole christian church, for 12 or 13 hundred years after Christ, excepting in particular cases, forfeit all claim either to candour or learning. This fact is fully proved, by the most respectable writers among the Pedobaptists. If any one wishes to see this proof, we refer him to Dr. Wall's Defence of his History of Infant-baptism, against Dr. Gale, — Moshier's Ecclesiastical History, the Magdeburg Centuriators, &c.

But should you ask, is there nothing to be done for our children? I answer, yes, undoubtedly much.

* Pedobaptists often immerse believers, which they certainly would not do, did they not believe it to be valid baptism. But we never on any occasion presume to sprinkle infants.

But let us, not by our great anxiety for them imitate Saul, who unwilling to wait in God's appointed way, *forced himself and offered a burnt offering.** Upon which, Samuel told him that he had done foolishly; and that he had *not kept the commandment of the Lord*, notwithstanding he had sacrificed. Under the gospel dispensation, we are not to learn the duties we owe to our children from Abraham's covenant, nor from the law of Moses; but from Christ and his apostles. The voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, **HEAR HIM.**" Let us then inquire what Christ has said and done, respecting children. "*Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" MATT. XIX. 13, 14. MARK X. 14. LUKE XVIII. 15, 16. This account is given us by three evangelists above-mentioned. They all refer to a particular instance, although there is some small variation in their accounts. The case was undoubtedly new and singular, or the disciples would not probably have rebuked those who brought them. I am inclined to think with Dr. Doddridge, that they were not brought for healing; for in that case, the disciples would not have been likely to have discouraged their coming: but they were brought to him for his blessing: or that he should "lay his hands on them and pray." The disciples very probably thought their Lord too much occupied, to concern himself with these *little ones* who were incapable of understanding his doctrine. But it afforded a most interesting occasion for Jesus to show his condescension and regard to this helpless part of our fallen race; of which so great a proportion never arrive to years of understanding. But what does this example teach us? Undoubtedly, that we should bring our children to Christ now for the same purpose.— They equally need his blessing; and he is equally capable of bestowing it on them, as if he were on earth.

* 1 Sam. xiii. 12.

But as this is the only reason assigned for their being brought, it would be a very singular and extraordinary conclusion, to infer their baptism from this transaction. Let us not be wise above what is written. It is added, *for of such is the kingdom of heaven*. Well, say some, are they not fit subjects for baptism, if they are fit for the kingdom of heaven? This does not necessarily follow. Angels are fit for the kingdom of heaven, but they are not fit subjects of this institution: no more are infants, for it is limited to *repenting sinners*. I recollect somewhere to have met with a very happy remark on this text. I thought it was by Doddridge, but I do not find it in his notes on the passage. I will however give it according to my best recollection. "*Of such is the kingdom of heaven*: that is, such a vast proportion of the human race die in infancy, who are all saved by the atonement of Christ, that it may be said with propriety, *of such is the kingdom of heaven*." This is at least a pleasant reflection to parents who are called to part with their children at this early period.

Christ's words are much of the same import, where he said to the disciples, "except ye be converted and become as *little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." MATT. XVIII. 3. The great object here seems to have been to inculcate meekness and humility. "Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this *little child*, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one *such little child*," who is thus humbled, "receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of *these little ones that BELIEVE IN ME*, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." The Baptists have been charged implicitly with thus offending little children, in not admitting them to baptism; and this awful threatening turned against them. But it must first be proved that Christ admitted them to baptism, before we can justly be charged with offending them by denying it to them. It is also to be remarked, that Christ says, "*these little ones that be-*

live in me." To such we never deny baptism, whenever we can obtain the evidence.

The foregoing are all the instances which occur to my recollection, where children were particularly noticed by Christ, excepting when he fed the multitude in the desert with five loaves and two fishes. Here it is said, "And they that had eaten, were about five thousand men, beside women and *children*."

I must ask your patience, my *dear Friend*, to one remark more. Most, if not all the churches mentioned in the New Testament were planted by the apostles before the book of Acts was written. And all the epistles were written, as appears by the chronology in our Bibles, either a little before, or soon after. Unless we except John's epistles, and what he wrote to the seven churches of Asia. The writer of the book of Acts carries his history up to A. D. 63. Most of Paul's epistles were written before this. His second epistle to Timothy, which was probably his last work, as he was then ready to be offered, was written A. D. 66. The second epistle of Peter was written about the same time. Those of James and Jude were several years earlier. St. John's epistles were probably written about A. D. 90, and the book of Revelation completed A. D. 96.

In two of Paul's epistles he particularly mentions children, (EPH. VI. 1. COL. III. 20.) "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right." Again, "Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord." In both places he also exhorts parents, or rather fathers. "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

If baptism made any part of the duty of parents to their children, how surprising it is that they should not be reminded of it by some of the apostles. Pedobaptists, it is believed, are seldom wanting on this point. If children were then dedicated to God by baptism as they now are, how happens it that there

are no exhortations to *them* to remember their "*baptismal vows*?" &c.

If we obtain mercy of God to be faithful, we shall daily present our children in our prayers to Jesus, and entreat him to bless them. We shall also be more concerned to bring them up in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord*, than to indulge them in the fashionable amusements of the world. But I will not enlarge,

I now beseech you, my Friend, to read with candour what has been stated in the preceding pages, and ponder with great seriousness the facts which may have presented themselves to your mind in the perusal. And should you feel a conviction, that John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, administered baptism to such only as professed repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; you will then see the unavoidable conclusion, viz. that none but such ought now to be baptized. If the places chosen for the administration of the ordinance, such as *Jordan, and Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there*; their going down *into the water*; and being baptized *in Jordan*, and coming up straightway *out of the water*; together with the plain signification of the word, which a vast proportion of the most learned and respectable Pædobaptists acknowledge means immersion, should produce a conviction in your mind that this must have been the ancient manner of baptizing, then you can be at no loss, in what way you ought to be baptized.

You will be told, that John's baptism was under the law; and therefore not to be taken into the account. It will be admitted that the ceremonial law did not wholly cease, until the death of Christ; but this does not prove that John did not introduce the new, the gospel dispensation. This has been often acknowledged by our Pædobaptist brethren, when not disputing on baptism. But suppose it to be a fact, that John did not baptize in the name of the Trinity, and that Christ was not baptized upon a profession of faith; would either of these circum-

stances have any influence to alter the act of baptizing? It might as well be said, that immersion is not the same act, unless performed for the same reasons. Such a supposition is too absurd to be admitted.

There is as much reason to suppose, that Christ was not baptized in the same manner as John's other candidates were, inasmuch as he was not baptized for the same reasons; as to suppose that the apostles baptized in a different manner, merely because they made use of different words in the administration. There is no intimation in the scriptures, that the rite was performed in different ways.

To get clear of all the evidence in favour of our sentiments arising from John's baptism, you may be told that the christian dispensation did not commence until after the resurrection of Christ; that, consequently, all the baptisms previous to this were under the law. If you admit this argument, I beg to know by what authority you will commemorate the Lord's Supper! for this was instituted before Christ's death, and consequently must have been under the law! Shocking as this may appear, such extraordinary lengths have many gone, in order to support what we believe to be an error.

If in reading the preceding remarks, the Spirit of God should enlighten your mind to see the path of duty, then I conjure you by the love you bear to the Saviour, and by the still greater love he has manifested to you in leaving you an example, that you would follow his steps. As you regard the peace of your own soul, and the purity of the church of Christ, let me entreat you to pursue that path which is so plainly marked out in the gospel. You will remember, that in keeping his commands there is great reward. We have need to take heed to ourselves, that we do not fall under the censure which Christ passed upon the pharisees, whom he charged with *laying aside the commandment of God, to hold the tradition of men*. Can you, without submitting voluntarily to this institution, as you believe it was practised by Christ and his followers, say, "*Lord, it is done as thou hast*

commanded?" We are not insensible, that **THIS SECT**, like the ancient christians, is every where spoken against. But what is the *friendship of the world*, which is declared to be *enmity with God*, compared to the approbation of Heaven? We love and esteem our friends, especially such as are pious; but ought we not to love Christ better? Indeed, if we do not, he has declared that we are not worthy of him.

It has been said, with a view no doubt to dissuade persons from being "re-baptized," (as it is called,) that we thereby "renounce that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost whom they adore." This, if true, would be a very solemn consideration! But can it be admitted as truth? Is it renouncing the sacred Trinity, to be voluntarily baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? A most extraordinary conclusion! No, we publicly and solemnly own those sacred names, and before angels and men avow our submission to Christ, as the only Lawgiver and Head of his church.

That you, my dear Friend, and all others who are desirous of *keeping the ordinances as they were first delivered to the churches*, may be led in the right way, and be made fruitful in every good work, shall be the fervent prayer of

Yours, in the gospel of a precious Saviour.

FINIS.

A
CRITICAL INVESTIGATION
OF THE
MODE OF BAPTISM
AS PERFORMED
IN THE
PRIMITIVE CHURCHES

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PREFACE *by the* EDITOR.

IN the following treatise, the reader will find an impartial examination of the **MODE** of baptism. The impropriety of introducing, into the text, words from the learned languages, is freely acknowledged. But the subject, here treated on, would not admit the entire exclusion of all foreign words from the body of the work, and suffer them to be placed in the marginal notes.

But, any common man, the plain, English reader, who is desirous of being rightly informed, respecting the *mode* of baptism, will, instantly, perceive the necessity of recurring to those languages, in which the holy scriptures were first written; in which Moses and the prophets delivered the immediate commands of God; in which Jesus Christ and the Apostles taught the doctrines of grace and salvation.

The words from the Greek language, which import baptism, have, generally, such a similarity of sound to the English verb, *to baptize*, that no one will be very likely to mistake their meaning.

The reader will here find the words, which import *baptism* in the original Scriptures, have been traced in several of the Oriental languages, with a view of discovering whether those persons, who translated the Bible, or parts of it, into the Chaldaic, Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Persian languages, considered those words as necessarily implying, in the original, the act of *immersion*; in the administration of the ordinance of baptism. The result of the investigation may be seen toward the conclusion of the work.

Many heated disputes there have been, concerning the mode of initiating proselytes into the household of faith. But, in the present enlightened period of the world, and while we live under the full-orbed splendours of the Gospel, such disputes ill become us, considered as men, and are both disgraceful and injurious among the professed followers of the peaceful Jesus.

To excite and spread doubts, respecting the efficacy of the Divine ordinances, and raise scruples, concerning the proper mode of administering the Chris-

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

ian ordinances, is a common engine, with which the adversaries of Heaven attack the citadel of virtue and religion. Such mistaken wretches, however, we most sincerely pity, especially when we look forward and behold, through the perspectives of faith, the approaches of a solemn period, when all the ungodly, the malicious opposers of the Redeemer's cause and kingdom, shall be cast down, and doomed to the unceasing torments of conscious guilt, that "worm which never dies and that fire which is never quenched."

At the present day, while some treat all pretences to religion with pointed contempt; while others manifest an unpardonable coldness toward divine things; while others, again, who are desirous of being the humble followers of Christ, have real scruples of conscience, seem to be feeling after the path of duty amid religious darkness, and are vibrating between the *validity* of sprinkling and the *propriety* of plunging, it highly becomes those, who "are set for the defence of the Gospel," to paint Christianity in its true colours of glory and beauty. It becomes them to use their endeavors, to remove all seeming difficulties, in respect to the Christian ordinances, and especially to investigate that of baptism, and place it, before an observing multitude, on its true foundation.

Christians should "love more and contend less," about religious rites and forms. A careful perusal of this treatise may serve the purposes of doing away the distinction of party names, and of convincing the candid inquirer after the path of duty in the mode of baptism.

If one chooses *immersion*, let him be *immersed*. I will receive him, for all that, as a brother in Christ, and cordially welcome him to my fellowship and communion. If another chooses *sprinkling*, let him be *sprinkled*. Him I acknowledge, to have received the outward ordinance in an evangelical sense. In the reception of this ordinance, the application of water, whether little or much, I most devoutly conceive, is efficacious to the subject, as an external sign and acceptable in the sight of our Divine Lord and Redeemer.

N. H. FLETCHER.

EPHESIANS iv. 4 & 5.

There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling :—One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

THESE words remind us of the union of the true church of Christ. Though there are, and have been some different opinions imbibed by the professed churches of Christ, and by those whom, in a judgment of charity, we may view, as believers in Jesus. But while there may be some different ideas received by believers in Christ, yet there is an essential union, or in other words, there is an union in the essentials of Christianity. And it becometh all professed Christians, in all ages, to cultivate the knowledge of Christianity, to seek the spirit of Christ, to live in the exercise thereof, and cultivate harmony among themselves. And in this way, they would have far more true enjoyment, and do far more for the glory of God, in cherishing the spirit and interest of true religion, than in a passionate contending with, and reviling of each other, relative to those things which are not essential to Christianity.

While men profess to be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, if they cherish an haughty, an imperious spirit, which

would lord it over others, it appears there is something wanting of great worth.

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8, 9. Hence we may perceive, that all true saints partake of the spirit of Christ. Therefore it may be said of them, they partake of *one spirit*, let them be of what particular sect or denomination soever. The spirit of Christ is *one*, he is not divided against himself. And his spirit in his followers is *one spirit*. Hence there is an important union of the followers of Christ. Yet the remains of sin in them may, at times, occasion variance, in some respects, which may be followed by many pernicious consequences. There is, therefore, need of caution, to guard against such evils. Where there is a *pretence* of Christianity without the reality, no wonder, if the thorns and briars of variance and reviling advance with a rapid growth.

But these things, being true, do not confound the ideas conveyed by the Apostle in our text. Nay, if the ideas of professed Christians were more different than they now are, yet it would remain true, that there is an important union, or likeness, subsisting in the true people of God in the world. They all partake of the same fountain of life, the love of God and holiness dwelleth in their hearts, they believe in Christ made known to them, they love his name, and trust in his salvation. They ex-

ercise a spirit of brotherly kindness and charity toward their fellow men ; and, in particular, they regard those as brethren in Christ, who appear to be his followers in the essentials of religion, whether they are Jews or Gentiles bond or free.

True religion is the same in all ages. All the true saints who have lived, those who now live, and those who shall live, in ages yet to come, will make one family, one church, and will meet, hereafter, in the general assembly and church of the First born.

“ As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” If the followers of Christ, or the sons of God, are led on here by the spirit of God, let them travel on in harmony, as brethren, bound to their Father’s house. Let them not labour to build up new walls of separation, seeing Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, so that all his followers might unite, as in one assembly, in the service of their God and Saviour. Can we reasonably believe, that the saints in heaven are placed in as many divisions, as there are sects upon earth of those whom, in a judgment of charity, we may view as possessed of the essentials of true religion ? For my own part, I believe that all true saints will unite in heaven in one assembly.

But while we contemplate that all true saints will be one in Christ, and will re-

joyee, hereafter, before him, in a state of
 harmony; notwithstanding the partial sep-
 arations which take place here, yet we may
 reflect that, the conduct of the professed
 followers of Christ, and even of those who
 appear to be men of piety, serves to show
 the imperfections of saints in the present
 life. The Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 13. 9.
 "For we know in part; and we proph-
 sy in part;" and in the next verse, he adds,
 "But when that which is perfect is come,
 then that which is in part shall be done
 away." While the Apostle was mindful
 of the imperfection of saints in the present
 state, yet, while he drew to a close of the
 chapter containing the words just cited, he
 said, "And now abideth faith, hope, char-
 ity, these three; but the greatest of these
 is charity." Though the Apostle was a-
 ware that saints are in a state of imperfec-
 tion, in this life, yet he maintained that,
 they partake of these graces, *faith, hope,*
 and *charity*, that is, in some measure. And
 he says, "But the greatest of these is cha-
 rity." This, we may observe, carries the
 image of God. True love to God and his
 creatures, is truly a Christian spirit. It
 tends to lead men in the paths of righteous-
 ness, peace, and friendship; while a selfish;
 proud, and bigoted spirit tends to lead on in
 darkness, error, contention, and confusion.

But let the professed followers of Christ
 attend to the idea, that the Redeemer hath

prepared the way that his followers may draw near to God in the same assembly, in the same temple.

The believing Gentiles are not to be reputed as strangers, or foreigners, but "they are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph. 2. 13. And in 19th verse, the Apostle represents the believing Gentiles as fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; and he goes on in the following verses thus. And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone : in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord ; in whom ye also are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

The believing Gentiles are built on the same foundation which the Apostles and Prophets stood upon ; that is Christ, who is the foundation laid in Zion.

A building may be composed of many parts, yet when they are compacted together they become one building. Though the human frame hath many members, and those members consist of smaller component parts, yet being combined in their places and order, they compose one body. The Apostle, speaking of the church of Christ, might represent it figuratively, as a building, which groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord ; or he might compare it to a

body, and consider Christ as the head, to rule and direct it. Under this simile, we perceive that the members should not be at variance. One should not say to another, "I have no need of thee;" but let each fulfil the design of its being, and all, collectively, contribute to the good of the whole body.

In the words of our text, it is said,—
 "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Now, while we make this passage of sacred writ the subject of further contemplation, let us attend to the several ideas here expressed by the Apostle in their course.

First, he saith, "There is one body."—This may be understood as implying the true church of Christ. And we may view the expression as applicable to the whole church of Christ, collected, and to be collected out of Adam's race. They all do, and will belong to Christ, as his people, and will be united in one body, in heaven.

But the Apostle was addressing saints on earth, and in the first verse of the chapter which contains our text, he called on them to walk worthy the vocation wherewith they were called. It is not only important for men to become Christians, but it is also important for them, afterward, to conduct like Christians. It is important for them to fulfil the part of members of that body.

of which Christ is the head. They are called to be a peculiar people to God in the world, *zealous of good works*. They are called to holiness, to newness of life, and new obedience. And they should act as one man, in the service of God, united in obedience to the divine will made known to them. As it is the duty of an individual to use his endeavors to cultivate his mind with knowledge of the will of God, so it is the duty of the whole body of saints on earth, to use their endeavors to advance in the knowledge of divine things, and, at the same time, unitedly endeavour to live in the *practice of the will of God*. Let them confide in Christ as Saviour, and hearken to him as a lawgiver, unitedly repair to him, the source, for all the graces which pertain to the Christian character, and be led of him in the exercise of them. Let him influence their hearts, and actuate their lives. While this is the case, they may be considered as one body. And they should endeavour to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

It appears the Apostle endeavored to stimulate the Ephesian saints to an harmonious practice of Christianity, and while he laboured for this, he represented the followers of Christ as one body. Although they might entertain some different ideas, and that may be expected in all ages, that even good men will have some different

ideas, though they agree in the essentials of true religion. While this may be expected in the present life, saints should bear it in mind, and let their conduct favour of reciprocal charity. To illustrate this idea let us view a number of persons, who live conveniently for society. They exercise repentance for sin, they truly believe in Christ, they love God supremely, and wish to know and practise his will.— Such we may consider as true members of Christ's body, the church; and we should be ready to think they might unite in acts of devotion in Christian society; and it is true they may in some important respects; yet there may be some different ideas imbibed among them, which may occasion some disagreeable effects. For instance;— while one calls his family together, evening and morning, to unite in family prayer, he, like Daniel of old, may fall on his knees in that act of devotion. Another calls his family together evening and morning, to unite in addressing the Fountain of good, but he offers his supplications to Heaven, standing on his feet. He may think this to be the most suitable posture of body for that exercise, while the other thinks that the posture of kneeling is the most suitable. When they come into a worshipping assembly, if they are warmly attached, each to his chosen posture of body in prayer, one or the other of them

may endure a disagreeable sensation, as it is not to be expected that he who leads in the duty of public prayer will stand and kneel both at the same time. But, if he who uses himself to pray kneeling should go into a worshipping assembly, where prayer is performed in a standing posture, shall he conclude *that* is not true prayer, because it is not performed in that posture which he prefers? No. Or would it be wisdom in him to withdraw from the society of his brethren in Christ, on that account, as though his conscience was wounded? It may appear to a candid mind, there is no just occasion of turning his back on his Christian brethren on account of such a circumstantial difference. In St. Mark's gospel, 11. 25. Christ said, "And when ye *stand* praying," from which we are led to think, prayer was practised in a standing posture, and that Christ did not object to it. At the same time we may justly believe that no man was confined to that posture of body in the act of prayer. But Christ himself might, at times, kneel down and pray, as we read in Luke 22. 41. "And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and *kneeled* down, and prayed." But this doth not confine his followers to the act of *kneeling* in prayer; or, if he, at any time, fell on his face and prayed, as related in Mat. 26. 39. that doth not con-

fine his followers to that mode. But it appears that he affords his followers liberty to address the Father of mercies in *any* devout and decent manner, without their being restricted to this, or the other particular posture of body. To pray is a duty enjoined in the gospel; but the mode, as to the posture of the body, is not enjoined with the force of a divine command, although some mode in this respect, is evidently requisite.

Hence it is evident, that Christians should guard against bigotry in their minds, and avoid censuring each other, if they make a different choice in that respect. But let their minds be unitedly engaged in that which Christ requires; that is prayer.

Further; while those Christians are favoured with opportunity for social devotion, and the Lord's supper is presented, one may think it most suitable to partake of it *sitting*, while another says, let us partake *kneeling*; but shall they consider *either* as essential to the partaking of that ordinance? According to ancient history, I rather believe that Christ and his disciples partook the passover in a reclining posture. Yet we do not find that he has confined his church to this mode, or to that of sitting, or kneeling at his table; nor that he has confined his followers to any particular hour of the day, or evening for the commemoration of his dying love. And hence, though some

may choose to partake that ordinance at mid-day, and others toward evening ;— while some may choose to sit on their usual seats in the house of God, and others choose to fall on their knees, while they receive the emblems of the body and blood of the Saviour, let them not upbraid each other for using that liberty, wherewith Christ has made them free. But let all be attentive to the ordinance of Christ. Let the followers of Christ act like one body, notwithstanding their different thoughts in such non-essentials.

• Further ; the Apostle not only informs, that there is *one body*, but also, that there is *one spirit*.

While Christ collects a body out of the fallen race of man, he actuates that body by his spirit.

The spirit of God operates in the hearts of his people. There the love of God reigns ; they love him supremely for his superlative excellence ; they delight in Christ “ as the brightness of the Father’s glory, and express image of his person.”— They delight in the Holy Spirit, in his sanctifying influences or operations. They delight in the attributes of God displayed before them. Both his natural and moral perfections attract their attention. They can rejoice that he is, that he is eternal and immutable, that he is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, that he is a God of

infinite wisdom, inflexible justice, a God of truth, and yet a God of mercy, who delighteth not in the death of the sinner, but is disposed that he should repent and live. They delight in God as a being of infinite goodness, whose compassion is beyond our power to describe. They view his nature as perfectly pure, and his ways, as holy, just, and good: They view his laws as perfectly just, his rewards as truly great and infinitely desirable, his threatenings equitable and justly to be feared. They wish to obtain the blessings of his grace, and to be freed from an exposedness to his displeasure. While they love God and his laws, they delight in holiness which he requires, and hate sin which he abhors and forbids.—Yea, they hate sin in themselves, are opposed to it, not because it is in this or that person, but because it is evil, because it is dishonourary to God, and injurious to his creatures. They desire to be purified from its pollution by the blood of Christ, to be instamped with the divine image, to have Christ formed in their hearts, and to be enabled to live to his glory. While the love of God reigns in their hearts, they also regard their fellow creatures as themselves, are disposed to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly through the courts of life.—They are the friends of Zion, they seek her peace and prosperity. They pray and labour for the interest and advancement of

true religion. They wish well to their fellow men, wish them to be restored to the image of God in Christ, and that they may obtain eternal salvation in God's appointed way. They have a spirit which leads them to desire and supplicate that God's kingdom may come and his will be done on earth, in some good measure, as in heaven above. This *one pure spirit*, in some degree, operates in all the true church of Christ on earth, leading them to glorify their God and Saviour, and to do good to their fellow men, while on their way to that inheritance which is purchased by Christ, and reserved for them in glory.

While we view the true church of Christ as *one body*, and having *one spirit*, we are reminded also that they have *one hope* of their calling. They are called of Christ to repentance and faith in him, are called out of darkness into his marvellous light.— They are called from death to life, from the kingdom of the great apostate, into the kingdom of the great Redeemer. They are called from the service of the prince of darkness, to the service of the Prince of light; are called from the love and practice of sin, to the love and practice of holiness, are called off from self-confidence, to trust in Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and eternal life. They *hope* for salvation through the merits of Christ.

a salvation from sin and from the penalty of the law. They hope in him for a restoration to the image of God, and for the enjoyment of his favourable presence forever.

The hope which the saints of God entertain may, in a comprehensive view, be termed *one hope* ; though they may entertain many subordinate hopes, in which they differ in some respects. While good men wish to be instrumental of the glory of God on earth, one may suppose that, if he were favoured with certain means or circumstances, he might be more instrumental of the divine glory, and hence wish and hope for those means or circumstances ; while another may conclude that some other means might be the most suitable for him to improve in the service and for the glory of God, and hence desire and hope for those means as conducive to his usefulness. And it may be that both act well therein. One and the same situation in life would not be best for every follower of Christ. But, while there may be some circumstantial differences, relative to the particular hopes of pious men, yet there is an harmony in their essence, so far as they are justifiable.

While true saints are to be considered as *one body* and as having *one spirit* in an essential respect, and as having *one hope* of their calling, one and the same main object of attention and pursuit, the glory of God and their eternal salvation, there is also *one*

Lord. Christ is the head of the church, the King whom God hath set on his holy hill of Zion. He is the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.— He is the Redeemer of Israel and their Lawgiver. And he is not only to be acknowledged, as the Lord of the true church now, but such he has been heretofore, before he assumed his humanity and appeared on earth incarnate. We are informed, respecting the Law, that it was “ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator.” And he will continue to be the Lord of his people, and bring his work to the consumation. To him it becometh the human race to repair, and submit to his dominion. He hath the right of dominion over us, “there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” Earthly kings and potentates may be of short continuance. Their splendour may fade and their power vanish, but Christ’s power, dominion, and glory will remain.

And the people should be attentive to him as their Sovereign, look to him for direction, and endeavour to walk in his ways, acknowledging no other to be Lord over them in matters of religion. They should be cautious to guard against such a spirit, as would lead them to lord it over any of their brethren in Christ. But, let Christ hold the reigns of dominion, and let all look to him as their Lawgiver and Judge.

for to him it is we must all give account.

We are also taught, there is *one faith*.—
There is a faith in one and the same Saviour, Jesus Christ. The saints of old believed in the being and perfections of God; and that there was a Saviour to come, and trusted in divine grace. It was through grace they obtained salvation; though they had not so clear discoveries of the Saviour and his work, as have since been made.—
They believed in God as a being of infinite fulness of power, wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy, and believed his promises that a Saviour should arise, at the period infinite Wisdom chose. So that we may view them as believing in the same God and Saviour, saints now believe in; though they had not so particular ideas of the Mediator; of his works, of his doctrines, miracles, and the way in which he would atone for sin, as saints now have, who are favoured with the clear gospel light. Yet, through divine grace, they were enabled to exercise a saving faith in God and the Saviour to come, and that faith may be viewed as the same in essence, with the faith which true saints now exercise; though not the same in every particular, as their views were not so clear, particular, and extensive, respecting Christ, and the mediatorial work. Saints now, favoured with the light of the Gospel, not only believe in God, as God, and that there was to be a Saviour, but

they also receive the testimony that Jesus of Nazareth is the Saviour, who was promised of God, and pointed out by the prophets. They believe the testimony of his miraculous conception, the testimony of his works, which displayed the power of God in him. They receive the doctrines which he taught, and which are handed down to us, believing them to be true, pointing out the way of salvation, and the path of duty for men. They believe in his divinity, in his humiliation, his sufferings, his death and resurrection, his ascension and the attending circumstances pointed out in the Gospel.

They believe in the promise of his holy Spirit, in the ability of Christ to save, and in his disposition to save according to the gospel plan. They believe that he is approved of the Father, and that God is ready to hear, pardon, and save those who trust in his mercy in Christ, and repair to him in his name in sincerity and truth.— They believe in his righteousness, as adequate to the demands of the law, while they despair of a righteousness of their own, to avail for justification. They believe in the efficacy of his Spirit for the renovation of their heart, and the purifying of their lives. Through divine grace, enabled thus to believe in Christ, they can resign themselves into the hand of divine power and mercy, trusting their all for time and eternity in the hand of Christ. Having such

views of God, as God, and of the Saviour, as a Saviour, having such faith, their hearts flow forth in the exercise of love to God for what he is, and of gratitude for what he does. They find the obligations of gratitude binding on them, to improve their time and faculties in the service of God, to the praise of his grace and glorious name.

While we contemplate the situation, or circumstances, of the saints of old, under the Levitical dispensation, and of those who have their day after the incarnation, sufferings, resurrection, and ascension of the Redeemer, we may justly conclude, there may be a difference, relative to the degree or extent of their faith, in many particulars, though there may be an agreement in essence. It may be justly expected that the faith of saints under the advanced light of the Sun of Righteousness, in the gospel day, should exceed that of saints in the primitive ages, when the morning rays were but just appearing, as their minds are aided with further information afforded by the Prince of Peace. They have advantages of knowing not only more, respecting Christ and his work on earth, but also relative to a future state, the happy state of saints after death, and the wretchedness of sinners, the future resurrection of the body, and the events of the solemn day of retribution, and the final portion then to be a-

warded to the friends and enemies of the Author of salvation.

As to those who now live, having the advantages of the gospel day, there may be a considerable difference relative to the extent of the views of saints. Some may obtain more extensive ideas of divine things, than others. Hence, their faith may be more extensive, embracing far more particulars; while their faith is built on the same foundation, and may be said to agree in essence. Hence, though the faith of true saints may be considered as one faith, as to the essence of it, yet it is not to be expected that their ideas will be exactly commensurate in divine things, and hence, it is not to be expected that their faith will be exactly commensurate; at least in the present life. But all should endeavour not only to be founded on the Rock of Ages, but also to cultivate their minds, as far as possible, with knowledge of divine truth, and while their just ideas expand, and their faith become stronger and more extensive in exercise, let their love to God proportionally advance, and their exertions also for his glory.

Further. While we consider the unity of the church of Christ, as that of one body, having one Spirit, one hope of their calling, one Lord, and one faith, we are also taught there is *one baptism*.

There is one essential baptism ; that is, of the holy Spirit, the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the holy Ghost. This baptism is essential to our salvation, and may be considered as one baptism, respecting all the subjects of it. Though there may be different degrees of guilt washed away, and different degrees of grace communicated ; yet this baptism is one in its nature, as it effects a purifying from sin, and a restoration to the image of God ;—that is, in some measure.

This one baptism of the holy Spirit will be effectual to the subject ; for, agreeably to the voice of Christ, his grace communicated will be as “ a well of water, springing up to everlasting life,” so that we may believe, the person once baptized of the holy Spirit, will not fail of salvation.

While we contemplate the outward ordinance of baptism in the church of Christ, we may bear in mind there is *one* baptism. Christ instituted but one outward ordinance of baptism, for his church and people on earth.

In the Levitical services, there were many particular institutions of washing, sprinkling, and applying water, and other liquids, relative to persons and even inanimate substances ; and those uses or applications of water and other liquids, under those institutions, the great Apostle might, with propriety, term “ divers baptisms.”

and some of them were to be often repeated respecting the same persons. But in the present dispensation, there is but one outward ordinance of baptism appointed of Christ for his followers to observe. This is not to be often repeated to the subject, but let the ordinance be once administered to the same subject, and that is sufficient.

Hence, we may readily subscribe to the idea communicated by the Apostle, that, in the present dispensation, there is one baptism in the church of Christ, as an outward ordinance. And this appears to be the initiating, or introductory ordinance into Christ's visible church. The baptism of the holy Spirit introduces the subject into the true, or real Church of Christ, and the outward ordinance of baptism with water, serves as the initiating ordinance into his visible church, and may be considered as an emblem of the baptism of the holy Spirit. This ordinance of Christ should not be treated with contempt or neglect, but be carefully and devoutly attended to, in all ages, till Christ shall appear in glory.

While we meditate on the ordinance of baptism, as a solemn and important institution of Christ, (as well as that of commemorating his dying love) it may be asked, *how is this ordinance to be administered.*

Relative to this question, there have been many heated disputes, among the pro-

selfed followers of Christ. Some of which, perhaps, favor too much of human passions and party spirit, which it is difficult wholly to avoid, in this imperfect state. Yet we should endeavour to avoid them in a peculiar manner, when engaged in divine things, not trusting in ourselves, but in him who is able to support and direct us.

While we attend to the question proposed, it may be observed that, when our translators of the bible performed that work, they endeavored to represent the contents thereof, in general, in the English language; yet there were some words, which, instead of translating, they chose rather to transcribe according to the idiom of our language. Among these words, the term *Baptize* is one. This we may view, not as a native word of the English language, but transcribed from the Greek. Hence, the English reader might be expected to enquire, what is the meaning of this term. And hence, it is evident there is occasion for recurrence to the Greek language for information.

Therefore let us turn thereto, and observe, that the verb in Greek is *Baptizō* and is a derivative, it is evidently derived from another verb, to wit, *Baptō*, and as it ends with these three letters, i, z, o, I shall take liberty, for the sake of distinction, to term it a derivative in *izo*. In the Greek language there are many derivatives of this ending, many derived from verbs, and many

from other words. When they are derived from other words beside verbs, they commonly have some kindred signification to that of the words they are derived from, either natural or figurative. And as to those derived from verbs, having endeavoured to examine them all, I think, that about one third of them agree with their primitives in signification, the other two thirds appear to differ in some way or other. Therefore on the scale of probabilities, if a derivative of this description is presented, and we know not the meaning of it, we may conclude it is about twice as likely to differ from its primitive word as to agree with it, in signification. Therefore, while it is evident Baptizō is derived from Baptō, that is not a proof that it is of the same signification with Baptō; and, on the other hand, it is not a proof that it differs from it, as there are about a third part of them which appear to agree with their primitives.

Yet observe, there are some primitives, which point out a certain act, and that act performed tends to a certain natural consequence, and the verb may be carried into a secondary use in that consequence, and in those instances in which this is the case, I have not found the derivative in izo, derived from the first person of the verb, confined to the first sense of the primitive verb, although it may hold the liberty of the first act of the primitive, as well as the liberty

of any other act, to produce the effect it points out.

For instance. The verb *Ethō*, the first sense of which is *to act out of custom or fashion*, that is, *for custom or fashion's sake* (*ex consuetudine facio*). Thus one man may go with others, stately, to the place of public worship, and do this *for custom or fashion's sake*, having no religious principle to lead him to that practice. And here let us observe that, as he follows this practice, tho' *for custom or fashion's sake*, he uses or habituates himself to the practice. This consequence takes place of course.

And the verb *Ethō*, in the perfect middle, (*eiōtha*) is used in this consequential sense, *to accustom or to be wont*, which may as well take place where the agent acts on principles of virtue, as where he acts merely for the sake of *custom or fashion*. A truly pious man may accustom himself to attend the public worship of God, but at the same time not for mere custom or fashion's sake, but out of love to God, and a desire of advancement in knowledge and grace. Hence his conduct is quite different, as to the motive or principle he acts upon, from that of the former described, who attends public worship for fashion's sake. The conduct of this man may be expressed by *ethō* in the first sense of that verb, while the conduct of the pious man is not to be expressed thereby in the first sense of that verb, but may

be expressed by it in the secondary or consequential sense, which is *to accustom or to be wont*, as a person may accustom himself to a practice in a virtuous manner, as truly as he could in a vain or vicious manner.

We find this term used respecting the conduct of Christ himself which we must understand in the secondary sense of the verb. For instance, Luke 4. 16. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day." Christ as his custom was, that is, as he accustomed himself, went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. But while it is evident that Christ habituated himself to go into the synagogue on the sabbath, yet it was far from being for mere *custom or fashion*. Hence his conduct therein is not to be expressed by the verb *ethō* in the first sense of it, yet might be expressed by it in its secondary or consequential sense; which is *to accustom or to be wont*.

From this verb *ethō* arises *ethizō*, which signifies *to accustom or inure*, (*assuefacio*) which a person may do on principle either good or evil. The verb does not limit as to that; it does not confine the agent to the first act, or sense of its primitive (*ethō*) any more than it does to the secondary sense of it. But it evidently holds the liberty of the first act of its primitive, as well

as the liberty of any other, which may produce the effect pointed out. So that *ethizō* evidently holds as extensive a circle of action, as *ethō*, the primitive has, in its first and secondary, or consequential, senses taken together.

A person may habituate himself to a practice and do it either for custom's sake, or from some other motive. Hence, if it is said of a man, he habituates himself to a certain practice, we are not authorized thence to conclude, that he does it merely for custom's sake, or, on the other hand, to determine, that he acts on the principles of virtue. The term leaves this point uncertain. And while it leaves this point uncertain, this is plain, this *derivative* is not confined to the first act, or sense of its primitive.

This derivative is used in Luke 2. 27. "And he came by the spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law" (*kata to eithismenon tou nomou*). Here observe the clause, "to do for him after the custom of the law," that is, to perform the service which the law required.

We are not to suppose the law required that for custom or fashion's sake, but the Lawgiver had a wise and good design in his appointment, and we have no reason to doubt the sincerity of those parents spoken of. But while a divine law required a cer-

tain service, we have reason to believe it was attended on by them, in the fear of God.

For another instance let us take the verb *Doloō*, which signifies to act with deceit, or to deceive.

It is obvious that, if a person deceives another, he thereby adulterates the mind of the other with some wrong idea, with some idea which should not be infused. If a person acts deceitfully, endeavouring to deceive another, whether he succeed or not, yet he aims at that effect. It appears the Greeks carried this verb into a secondary use in this sense, *to adulterate*. Scapula, in his Lexicon, cites this example, under this sense of the verb (*dolōsantes tou oinou*), *adulterating wine*. The Apostle uses this word in his 2. Epistle to the Cor. 4. 2. where we read, "nor handling the word of God deceitfully." This expression appears to be a circumlocution; but in some good translations it is rendered thus, "nor adulterating the word of God," that is, not corrupting, or mingling error with the word of God. If we read the passage according to the first sense of *doloō*, "nor acting with deceit or deceitfully the word of God," this doth not appear to me accurate, or natural. Or if we read it thus, "nor deceiving the word of God," this, I think, is no more to the purpose. But if we consider the Apostle as using the term in its

secondary sense, as some good translators have, it appears pertinent, thus, "nor adulterating the word of God."

The derivative (*dolizō* Scapula defines *adultero*), *to adulterate*. This he considers as the meaning of *dolizō*, whether there is any deceit acted, effected, attempted, or not. This term does not confine to the first sense of its primitive, to act with deceit, or to deceive, nor does it prohibit that act. For instance. A seller of spirits may mix spirits of different qualities, or he may mix water with spirits of an high quality, and do this for his own use, not to impose on others, and he is not to be considered as deceiving himself, or as making any such attempt. And while he thus adulterates the spirit, this act of his may be expressed by *doloō* in the secondary or consequential sense of the verb, or by *dolizō* in the general sense of that derivative, but not by *doloō* in its first sense.

Further. This seller of spirit orders his servant to draw the remainder of a certain cask, to fill another which is partly drawn, concluding that remainder about sufficient for that purpose. The servant, having opportunity for the fraud, fills the cask he was to fill, but with water instead of the spirit in the other cask, and takes that spirit to himself, unknown to his master. In this case, the servant acts according to the sense of *doloō* in the first act of it, as he

acts a deceitful part, *he deceives*, and he acts according to the secondary sense of that verb, as he *adulterates*; and this may be expressed by *dolizō*, as that implies to *adulterate*, whether there is any *deception* or not, or whether there is any such attempt or not. Hence it appears there may be the act of *adulterating*, where there is the act of *deceiving*, and where there is no such act or attempt, and so the derivative, (*dolizō*) may be used, either where there is the first act of its primitive, or where there is not, it is unconfined in that respect.

Having attended to these examples, let us proceed and attend to *Baptō* and *Baptizō*.

In Hill's Lexicon, *Baptō* is defined (*intingo, mergo, lavo*,) *to dip in, or dye*, that is, *to colour, or stain, to dip or plunge, to wash*.

Scapula, in his Lexicon, defines it by the Latin words, "*mergo, immergo, tingo, lavo*." By *mergo* and *immergo* we may understand him as meaning *to dip, to plunge, or immerse*. And while he defines it by *tingo*, in many cases there may be the act of dipping where there is not a total immersion. For instance. He adduces an example of a smith dipping an axe in cold water*, in

* Od. i. "Os d' ot' aneer chalueus polekun megan eee skeparnon ein udati psuchro baptee." English.

which case we know it is common to dip the edge of the axe in the water to fix the temper, while a considerable part is held above the water. But in cases of dipping substances in a dye, to colour them, it is common to immerse them.

But it appears that this Latin word *tingo**, is not confined to the act of dipping, either wholly or in part. It is represented as signifying to dip even where there may be an immersion or partial dipping; also used signifying to wet, infect, or stain, as where the act is that of anointing. Calepin cites an example of this kind, from Martial (Mentiris Juvenem tinxis Lentine capillis), "Lentin, thou feignest the youth with anointed hair."

Now, though it is obvious the ancients practised anointing their heads, that is, their hair; yet we have no reason to believe their custom was to dip their heads, or hair, in a vessel of oil, but to apply the oil to their hair. And while *tingo* was used relative to the act of anointing, we have no reason to suppose it was designed to convey an idea of actual dipping in such cases, but we may understand it as used in a

"As when a smith dippeth a great axe or a carpenter's axe in cold water."

"In epigr. Ef udato krosson ebaple."

"In the epigram, he dippeth the edge into the water." Scapula.

* See Calepin's Dictionary of eight languages.

Secondary or consequential sense, to convey the idea of that, which is the *effect* of dipping, that is, *a wetting* or affecting with moisture. This is the natural consequence of dipping a substance into a liquid.

We may take notice of another example he cites respecting the use of *tingo*, which is (Purpureo sanguine tingit humum), "with purple gore he stains the ground." From these instances of the use of the Latin word *tingo*, which is one of those by which *Baptō* is defined, we may perceive, that it was *not* confined to the act of dipping, but was used in a secondary sense, where the liquid *was applied* to the substance. While Scapula explains *Baptō* under the term *tingo*, he cites this Greek example (*baptein trichas*), which, I conclude, conveyed this idea, *to anoint the hair*, according to the other example in Latin, under one of the words by which *Baptō* is defined. He also represents it as signifying *to stain, or imbue*, as (*baptein enchos*), *to stain or imbue a sword*. And he explains it by *lavo*, which signifies *to wash*, that is in any way whatever. It is obvious a person may *wash* a substance, either with or without the act of dipping. The term *wash* is not confined or restricted in that respect.

It appears to me, however it may to others, that *Baptō* is, in short, as well represented by the English verb *to dip*, as by

any one verb in our language, that is, to dip either wholly or in part. This, I believe, is the primary sense of the term.— And then, as dipping a substance into a liquid serves *to wet, to wash, to dye, colour or stain it*, the word might thus be used by the Greeks, in a secondary or consequential sense, to convey an idea of those operations, and that, even where there was not the real act of dipping, but an application of some liquid which would produce the *effect of wetting, staining, or washing*, as though the substance were dipped, either wholly or in part.

Baptō is used in a number of instances in the sacred Scriptures, and it may be useful to turn to some of them.

It is used in Exod. 12. 22. “And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin.” Here the word in the Greek version, which answers to the verb *dip*, is *bapsantes*, and it is evident enough there was the act of dipping pointed out, though it is not certain there was a total immersion. It is used in Levit. 4. 6. “And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood (Kai bapsēi o iereus ton daktulon eis to aimā.) We may conclude that the priest dipped some part of his finger in the blood.

We also find this word used, Levit. 14. 6. “As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them, and the liv-

ing bird, in the blood of the bird that was killed over running water." In this passage, answering to the word *dip*, *bapsei* is used in the Greek. And in this case, relative to the cleansing of a leper, no doubt there was the act of dipping the living bird and the other articles mentioned. But, at the same time, no one can suppose there was an *immersion* of all these in the blood of the bird that was dead. There were two birds to be taken, and no difference of the birds pointed out; and one of them was to be killed in an earthen vessel over running water, and the other bird, with the other articles mentioned, were to be dipped in the blood of the former. But we cannot suppose the quantity of blood was sufficient for the *immersion* of the living bird and those other articles, or even for the living bird, yet they might be tinged, or stained with the blood in some measure, by being dipped into the vessel which contained the blood.

Another instance of the use of this verb we have in 2. Kings 8. 15. relative to Ben-hadad, king of Syria, and Hazael, where it is said, "And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth and * dipped it in water and spread it on his face, so that he died." In this case it is probable Hazael immersed the cloth for the

* *Ebabsen en to udati.*

purpose of filling it with water to effect his design. Though, it is true, he might fill it without that act, but it may be as natural to understand it in this sense, that he dipped the cloth really into the water, which he might do with dispatch.

Also in Dan. 5. 21. this term is used with respect to Nebuchadnezzar, where it is said, "And he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was *wet* with the dew of heaven." In the Greek version Baptō is used answering to the word *wet*, (kai apo tees drosou tou ouranou to soma autou ebaphee), "and his body was *wet* with the dew of heaven."

In this case we have no reason to conclude there was any act of dipping or immersing into a body of water, but that the dew of heaven fell on Nebuchadnezzar as on other substances exposed in the open air. Hence we may view Baptō as used here in its secondary or consequential sense. We cannot rationally conceive of it as designed to convey an idea of the act of dipping, in this case, but to convey an idea of that, which may be considered as the natural consequence, or effect of dipping, that is, *wetting*. If we dip a substance into water, this may be expected as the natural consequence, that it will be *wet*. And it appears that Baptō

was used in this secondary sense, as well as to convey an idea of the act of dipping, which produces that effect.

Another instance of the use of this verb we have in Rev. 19. 13. which in our translation is thus rendered. "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God." This expression evidently respects Christ the conqueror of his enemies. He is represented as clothed with a vesture *dipped* * in blood, as expressed in our translation. But there are some others in which it is differently represented.

In the Syriac version, it is thus rendered, (dauzleeh) *sprinkled*. In the Ethiopic version, it is (zanzuh) *sprinkled*. In the Latin Vulgate, it is (asperfa) *sprinkled* or *besprinkled*. And Pool, in his Synopsis, renders it (asperfa) *sprinkled*. And the Arabic version (infabaga) may be understood, either *dipped*, *imbued with colour*, *stained* or *wet*.

Now is it not reasonable to believe that those translators were as good judges of the meaning of the original, as ours were?

Beside this consideration, we may attend to the circumstances attending, while the vesture is represented as affected with the stain of blood. If a valiant warrior is engaged in the field; and cuts down his enemies before him, it may be natural to sup-

* Beammenon aimati.

pose that his garments will be *stained, sprinkled*, or colored, in some measure, by the blood of those falling by his victorious hand.

Relative to the case before us, we may observe that St. John, in the 18. chap. of the Rev. heard an angel proclaiming the fall of Babylon, by which we understand the fall or destruction of the antichristian power in the world. And in the beginning of the 19 chap. he saith, "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." In the 6th verse he saith, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." In the next verse he saith, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Thus, we perceive St. John had been pointing out the overthrow of the enemies of Christ and his kingdom, and that Alle-

Isias were proclaimed under the consideration, that God had avenged the blood of his servants, and that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, that is, Christ's power and kingdom prevail.

After these things were revealed to him, it seems there was, in some measure, a portrait of the scene of conquest held up to his view. In verse 11th and on, he saith, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God." And we are informed that the armies which were in heaven followed him; and that, "out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, with which he should smite the nations, that he should rule them with a rod of iron; and that he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." And St. John informs us, that he "saw an angel standing in the sun; and that he called to the fowls of heaven that they might gather themselves together unto the supper of the great God, That they

might eat the flesh of kings, of captains, of mighty men, of horses, and of those who sat on them, yea, the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

Now, taking in view the scene presented in this part of the Revelation, considering Christ as avenging the blood of his servants, as treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, as overcoming the power of his enemies like a mighty conqueror, it is no wonder that his vesture is represented as *stained* with blood, that is, with the blood of his enemies falling before him.

But in this conflict, there is not the least idea of his being cast down into any collection of the blood of the slain; so as to *dip* or immerse his vesture therein. But we may consider his vesture as *stained* or sprinkled, as that of a conqueror in the field; or, as of those who tread the winepress. This idea of treading the winepress may allude to a representation in the prophecy of Isaiah 62 chap. "Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah?" Here, in the Hebrew word (*chhaumts*), which is translated *died*, there appears to me to be no signification of the act of *dipping*, but of *sprinkling*, *tinging*, *staining*, *polluting*, and the like. And in the 3d verse the idea is made plain. "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I

will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment."

A number of translators have viewed the Greek word* in the passage we here hold in view, as designed to convey this idea, *sprinkled or stained*, rather than *dipped*.— And it appears to me, they had good and sufficient ground therefor. And while this is evident, it is also evident they considered baptō as used in a secondary or consequential sense.

Hence, it appears that the idea that baptō may be used, not only in cases where there is the act of dipping, but also where there is no such act, but an application of some liquid to a substance, is not a new or late idea, but has been of long standing and appears to be well founded.

Having examined the primitive verb, baptō, let us proceed to its derivative baptizo.

While we wish to obtain a just idea of the meaning of this word, which is used in the sacred scriptures, expressive of an ordinance of Christ, let us use the means we are furnished with for that purpose. Let us not confine ourselves to the information afforded by any one Lexicon, or even all of them we meet with, but attend to the information those writers have collected.

* Bēbammenon.

from Lexicons preceding theirs, and by their other researches. While we examine their ideas, collected by such means, we have the same right to search for ourselves which they had, using every suitable means in our power, to obtain the knowledge of the truth, in the case before us.

We will first consult Scapula, in whose Lexicon baptizō is defined as follows (mergo, seu immergo) *to dip, plunge, or immerse*; (ut quæ tingendi aut ablucendi gratia aqua immergimus). "as we immerse things in water for the sake of wetting or washing." He repeats (mergo) *to dip or plunge*, and adds (submerge, abruo aqua) "to plunge under, to overwhelm with water." Also (abluo lavo) "to wash off, to wash."

Here it is observable, this Lexicographer uses a number of words to convey his ideas of this term, and let us endeavour to find what the amount is.

To dip, plunge, or immerse, to plunge under, to overwhelm with water, to wash off, to wash.

The extent of these definitions is *to immerse or overwhelm, that is, with water*, which may be expressed by other words thus, *to dip wholly*; as to dip a substance wholly in water or other liquid, is *to immerse, plunge or overwhelm it*. Therefore, *to dip wholly* appears to be the extent of the verb, as here defined.

And, as here defined, it signifies *to wash*, and we may wash *with dipping, or without*.

In washing many things, it is common to dip them; yet in washing many others, they are *not dipped*. And we may dip substances in *part*, and *wash* them in *part*.—Therefore, it appears that the sum of these given definitions is nearly this, *to wet, or wash wholly, or in part, with or without the act of dipping either wholly or in part*.

This definition comprehends all the ideas which Scapula points out by those particular definitions recited.

In the next place, let us consult Hill's Lexicon, in which baptizō is defined (baptizō, mergo, lavo) *to baptize, to dip or plunge, to wash*. Here also it is obvious that, *to dip wholly* is the extent of the given definition (mergo et lavo) to dip, plunge, immerse, and wash, and it is equally plain, as already observed, that we may wash either with or without dipping. Hence, it is evident, there is no addition here to the definition given by Scapula, nor does there appear any diminution of it. Yet we may notice in Hill that, while he points out baptizō as derived from baptō, he represents it to be the *same* as baptō; and, in a certain sense, this observation may be admitted as very just. And we have no reason to suppose he designed it to be understood in every respect, as it is not the same word, but differently composed, and baptō is a primitive and this a derivative. But it may be considered as holding the same extent of circle, that baptō

has, in both its first and secondary significations. Hence, every act performed under baptō, may be performed under baptizō.— Though, it may be that, baptizō is no more confined to the first sense of its primitive, than it is to the secondary or consequential. In this sense, it may be freely admitted that, this definition is the same with its primitive; that it holds the liberty of the same extent, or circle of action. So that every act, performed under this primitive, may be performed under this derivative.

In the next place, we will turn to Professor Stock, in whose Lexicon for the Greek Testament, baptizō is defined (*lavo baptizō*), *to wash, to baptize*.

It is plain, this definition does not extend beyond the limits of those already given, but may coincide with them in substance; as in washing we may dip or immerse, or may wash without, and, in either case, the idea of wetting is involved; so that, agreeably to this definition, we may wet or wash wholly or in part; with or without the act of dipping either wholly or in part. And it is evident from what this Lexicographer further says, that he was aware of the force or extent of the verb, as to immersion, that it was common to dip or immerse things in water for the purpose of washing them, yet that they may be washed without that act, even by *sprinkling*. Yes, he appears to have tho't

that, to dip or immerse is the primary sense of baptizō, and that it signifies to wash ;— because it is common to dip or immerse things, for the purpose of washing them.— But it may be asked where this derivative sense is most likely to arise. Whether from the first act of the primitive verb, which is to dip, and tends to produce the consequence, *to wash* ; or to arise in the derivative verb itself, which is suitable to express the derivative sense of its primitive.

If I may be exempt from arrogance in answering this query, I would observe that, it appears to me altogether natural to consider this derivative sense as arising from the first act of the primitive verb. It is obvious that, both Scapula and Hill considered *washing* (the effect) as arising from the first act of baptō, which is to dip, and gave this as one of their definitions of that verb. And if this is a derivative or consequential sense of the primitive verb and involved in the derivative, how can it be said to arise, or be derived in the derivative verb, when its origin is manifestly further back ? This point is so plain there is no need of adding many words upon it. But if it were evident that the signification of washing is a derivative signification in baptizō, without relation to the primitive, this would still be plain, that baptizō has this signification of washing ; and as wash-

ing is not confined to the act of dipping; baptizō is not confined to the act of dipping. Having consulted these Lexicons, and finding their definitions of the verb we have in view amounting to this, *to wet or wash wholly or in part, with or without the act of dipping either wholly or in part*, we may proceed to examine what the definition is by analogy, comparing these verbs with some others which appear to be of the like description, as to their nature, or mode of signification.

Here we may reflect on those verbs which have already been brought into view in this discourse, namely, ethō and doloō. Ethō first signifies to act for custom or fashion's sake, and then in the perfect middle goes into a secondary sense, which is to habituate. And the derivative which arises from ethō, which is ethizō, signifies to habituate or accustom, which may take place in cases where persons act merely for fashion's sake, and may also take place in cases where they act on real and good principles. Hence, we may consider ethizō, as the same with its primitive, ethō, in this respect; that is, it has the same extent of circle to act in which its primitive has, in both its first and derivative significations; so that every act performed under ethō, in its first and derivative senses, may be performed under the derivative ethizō, while the derivative is no more confined to

the first act of the primitive than it is to any other, which will produce the effect it points to. Therefore *ethizō* may be considered of this import, to *accustom*, either with or without acting for fashion's sake.

And *doloō* first signifies to act with deceit or to deceive, and then goes into a derivative or consequential signification, which is to *adulterate* (as he, who deceives another adulterates his mind). And its derivative, *dolizō*, signifies to adulterate, which, as already shown, may take place where there is a deception or where there is not. The derivative is no more confined on the one part than the other. And it may be said, that this derivative is the same with its primitive, in this respect, that it has the same extent of circle to act in, that its primitive has in both its first and derivative senses; so that every act, performed under *doloō*, may be performed under *dolizō*. Hence the meaning of *dolizō* is to *adulterate*, either with or without the act of deceit. It is naturally directed to the secondary sense of its primitive verb, holding the liberty of the first act of that verb, as well as the liberty of any other act which might be performed under the secondary sense of the primitive.

Hence, if we define *baptizō* by analogy to these, we have occasion to consider what is the first act of *baptō*, the primitive, which is, to *dip*, that is, *wholly or in part*; and then,

that baptō goes into a secondary, which is a consequential sense, namely, *to wet or wash* (dye or stain, if the liquid be such as will communicate a stain), and, in this sense is not confined to the act of dipping.

Now, such being the meaning of this primitive verb, when the derivative, baptizō, is produced, it may be expected to point to the consequential sense of its primitive, holding the liberty of the first act of that verb, as well as the liberty of any other act, performed under the secondary sense of the primitive. Hence baptizō may, by analogy, be defined, *to wet or wash wholly or in part, with or without the act of dipping either wholly or in part.* This appears to be the sum of the definitions contained in those Lexicons we have consulted. And it may be observed that, while Professor Stock defines baptizō, he begins with the consequential sense of the primitive (lave), "to wash." In which, it is obvious, he acted according to the nature of the verb.

Hence, from the definitions in those Lexicons cited and from analogy, it appears to be in vain to attempt to confine baptizō merely, to the act of dipping, to that of pouring or sprinkling, to that of wetting or washing. Though either of those acts may be performed under this verb, as well as under its primitive, baptō, yet it is not to be confined to any one of them in particular, but there is liberty for either, from

the act of wetting in part, to the immersion of the whole body.

Now, having thus far traced this subject, let us, in the next place, turn our attention to the use of the word in the New Testament, in some instances, in which the ordinance of baptism is not intended.

For this purpose, let Mark 7 chap. at the beginning. "Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the Scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and tables. Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?" And in the eighth verse, Christ saith, "For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do."

Here let us observe that, when the Pharisees and Scribes saw some of Christ's disciples eat bread with unwashen hands, they

found fault. It appears this had become a custom among the Pharisees, and indeed among all the Jews, to wash their hands oft, or eat not. Such a tradition they appear to have received of the elders. Therefore, when they saw some of Christ's disciples eat bread without washing their hands, that is, as preparatory therefor, they were ready to find fault, seeing the tradition of the elders was thus neglected.

Had there been a divine injunction, that men should wash their hands directly previous to partaking of their common food and had those disciples neglected it, there would have been just occasion of finding fault. But, as the practice depended on a tradition of the elders, instead of being founded in a divine injunction, it appears those disciples were not criminal in Christ's view. But it appears he disapproved the conduct of the Pharisees and Scribes, who were so tenacious of their traditions. And this should be well considered by all who are favoured with the light of the Gospel.

But further; let us notice particularly what is said in the 4th verse. "And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. Here baptizō is used, that is, in a declined state (ean mee baptizontai ouk esthiousi), which may be thus rendered, "unless they baptize, they eat not;" that is, unless they wash, they eat not. And, from the information afforded

in the preceding verses, we may perceive what they deemed as requisite previous to eating, namely, to wash their hands. But if any suppose they made it their practice to immerse themselves wholly in water every time they returned from the market, to this it may be observed, it is not impossible that they should pursue such a practice, though many may think it unlikely. But, in the latter part of the 4th verse of this chap. of Mark, it is said, "And many other things there be which they have received to hold; as the washing of cups and pots, brasen vessels, and tables." Here the Evangelist mentions a diversity of household utensils, some of which, no doubt were small and some large. It is well known that in washing (both a variety of vessels, it is common to dip some of them; that is, those which are small, in a larger vessel of water, while it is also common to apply water to those of a larger size which are cumbersome to handle. It is also frequently the case, that the application of water, in washing those which are large, is only to a part of them.

Hence we may with propriety believe that, in the cases presented, there were washings both with and without the act of dipping, and the Evangelist could term these washings (baptismous), the baptisms of cups, &c.

In Luke 11 chap. we find that Christ, at a certain time, was invited by a Pharisee to dine with him, and Christ went in and sat down to meat. In the 38th verse, it is said, "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed* before dinner."

Here in the original, the word which is rendered *washed* is *ebaptisthee*, which may be literally rendered *baptize*. But in this instance it is sufficiently evident the Pharisee marvelled, because Christ did not wash his hands previous to his sitting down to meat. And it is obvious, he might wash his hands without dipping them, or with. The *washing* of them was what the Pharisee appears to have expected, and according to the custom related in Mark 7. 3, which has been already considered.

In Matt. 15. 2. we may likewise see this custom of washing the hands, previous to the partaking of food, was zealously adhered to by the Scri. . . Pharisees. They observed the conduct of Christ's disciples, and said to him, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?—for they wash not their hands when they

* Luke 11. 38. The Ethiopic translation expresses the idea of washing the hands thus, "And the Pharisee therefore seeing him, wondered that his hands were not washed for dinner."

The Persian thus, "But when the Pharisee saw him, that he washed not hands before he ate, he was moved."

eat bread." And, in the case before cited from Luke 11. 38. if Christ had washed his hands before he sat down to partake of the food provided, we have no reason to suppose the Pharisee would have marvelled.

Another instance of the use of this word we are tracing, is in Paul's epistle to the Hebrews 9. 10. where, speaking relative to the Levitical services, or institutions of the ceremonial law, he said, "which stood only in meats and drinks, and diverse washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." Here, the Greek terms translated *diverse washings* (*diaphorais baptismois*) might be rendered more literally "diverse baptisms."

While we contemplate this representation, we may reflect, that there were a number of particular precepts, or injunctions in the ceremonial law, which required the use or application of water and other liquids, relative to persons and things, significant of cleansing, or consecration. These uses of water and other liquids, under those particular precepts, the Apostle undoubtedly had in view. Those institutions were such that the same person might be subject to a number of them, and some of them he might have occasion to practise repeatedly.

For instance; let us reflect on Aaron, and his sons, who were consecrated to God, for his service in the tabernacle. In the 29 chap. of Exodus we may find how they

were to be consecrated. Moses was directed to wash them with water. See verse 4th. This may be considered as one of those particulars the Apostle held in view. And he was not only to wash Aaron, but also to take of the anointing oil and pour it upon his head. See verse 7th. This was another particular. In the 20th verse, see a third. Moses was directed to take of the blood of a ram devoted in sacrifice, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, and to do the same respecting his sons. In the 21st verse, see a fourth particular, wherein he was directed to take of the blood on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon his sons and upon their garments.

A fifth, see in Exodus 30: 18 to the 21, wherein we find that they, that is, Aaron and his sons, were required "to wash their hands and their feet when they went into the tabernacle, when they approached the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord." This particular institution they had occasion to practise often. And if they should be affected with any of those defilements which were pointed out in other particular laws, they might become subject to those precepts provided in such cases, and requiring washing, or sprinkling, significant of cleansing.

In Numbers, 8 chap. we find Moses was directed to take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them.— And for this purpose, he was to sprinkle the water of purifying upon them, and they were to shave themselves and wash their clothes.

And it is observable, there were not only these particular institutions which we have thus traced, but others provided in various cases.

Hence, it may not be deemed strange, that the Apostle speaks of them as *diverse washings*, or rather, *diverse baptisms*. It does not appear probable there was the act of washing in each of these performances.— For instance ; in applying blood to the tip of Aaron's right ear, we have no reason to conclude there was the particular act of washing, but that of *wetting* with blood, and that only in part. When the act of anointing, or sprinkling, was performed, there was but a *partial wetting* (or washing if any choose the term) in this case. But when Moses washed Aaron and his sons, it might be that, he washed them wholly.— But if he did, the command given him (verahautstau), "and thou shalt wash," did not confine to the act of dipping on the one hand, nor did it prohibit on the other, according to the meaning of that word, as it is transmitted to us. It appears no more to confine, in that respect, than the English.

verb to wash does. And hence, if Moses washed them wholly, it appears the command, as given him in the Hebrew, left him at liberty, in respect to the mode, whether by dipping or by applying the water to them. Therefore let him perform in which mode he chose, he might be considered as complying with the divine injunction, and might consider himself as acting according to the word of the Lord, in as much as he *washed* them, which was the thing commanded.— And, while we reflect on these institutions, to which the Apostle undoubtedly referred, we may consider him as viewing the word baptizō of extensive latitude, even extending from the act of wetting in part, to the washing of the whole body, or substance.

Whether Aaron and his sons were wholly washed or not, it is evident there was a law, Levit. 15. 16. which in a certain cleansing required a total washing.

There were dippings enjoined respecting substances, some of which might be total, while it is plain others were only in part. The dipping of a bunch of hyssop in blood might be total, or it might not be, but the dipping of a living bird in the blood of a similar one slain, is obvious to have been only a partial dipping. But in those laws I do not recollect one which commanded a person to dip wholly, or immerse himself in water; though I am satisfied there were those which would admit the act, that is,

there was in some cases liberty thereof. Persons might wash or be washed by either dipping in, or applying water.

And hence it may appear that the word *baptism*, as used by the Apostle, may be understood as importing a *washing or washing*, either wholly or in part, with or without the act of dipping either wholly or in part. The definition already given appears to harmonize with the Apostle's use of the term.

Having thus attended to this term, consulting the definitions given in some Lexicons of repute, having examined by analogy and attended to the use of the word in the New Testament in cases where it is not used for the ordinance of baptism, we may take notice of one instance of the use of it in the Old Testament relative to Naaman the leper. See 2 Kings 5 chap. In the 10th verse he was directed by Elisha to go and wash in Jordan seven times. This direction may be considered a special one, not a part of the Levitical law. The direction was to *wash*. In the Hebrew it is (*verauhauttan*) "and thou shalt wash." In the 14th verse we are informed he went and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God. He complied with the direction given to wash seven times. Washing was enjoined, but whether he washed by dipping or by applying the water, as he washed the seven times, he acted according to the command of Elisha,

whose direction left him at liberty as to the mode.

We may observe here that, in the Greek version of the Old Testament, the word, which answers to *dipseti*, is, (εβαπτισατο) *be baptized*. And I doubt not but he immersed.

We now turn from the Greek to examine some of the ancient translations of the Gospel.

In the Syriac version, the word (gnimaud) which is used to convey the idea of baptizing, appears to be used in scripture as the Greek term is, when it signifies either a *total* or *partial* washing. Dr. Castle, in his Lexicon of the seven Oriental languages, represents it as signifying *to wash, to baptize*.

In the Arabic version* the word (gnamada) commonly used for baptizing, appears extensive in its significations, as defined by the writer just mentioned. He represents it as

* The Syriac and Arabic verbs which are commonly used signifying *to baptize*, appear to be derived from an Hebrew verb, which signifies *to stand, to constitute, to make firm, to confirm, to establish or ratify*.

Shindler, in his Lexicon, published in the year 1612, after he had defined those words as signifying *to baptize, to immerse, to tinge, to wash*, added this remark, (stabant enim qui baptisabantur) "for they stood who were baptized."

If he had said, those words admit of a standing posture while a person is baptized, I think the remark would have been just. That these were persons baptized in a standing posture, in the primitive ages, I have no doubt; yet according to some other ancient writers, it appears there was also the practice of immersion.

used sometimes where there is a *wetting*, as of the dust with rain, so that it will adhere or cling together; also to convey the idea of *supporting*, as by a pillar or column, to *shut up* or *confine*, as in 2. Samuel 20. 3.— Also to *make firm* or *confirm*. He also represents it as the Syriac word signifying to *baptize*. And it is evident that it may be used where there is the act of dipping, or where there is not.

A query may arise here, whether the Arabic translators had not more regard to the *design* of baptism, than they had to the *mode*, in the use of this word. Yet there is another verb (*ṭabaga*) which they use in some instances and which appears to me more naturally to convey an idea of dipping, but appears not confined thereto, but may be used signifying to *imbue*, or even to *wet*, as in Daniel 5. 21. respecting Nebuchadnezzar's being *wet* with the dew of heaven.

Hence it is evident that the term, by which they translated the Greek word (*baptizō*) which signifies to baptize, *did not confine* to immersing or dipping, in baptizing, though there was liberty therefor. And the translators therefore did not view the original word as confined to the act of immersion.

In the next place we will notice the Ethiopic version, in which the word (*ṭhama-ka*) by which *baptizō* is translated, is said by Dr. Castle to agree with an Hebrew

verb (*taubaung**) which, as defined by Shindler and Leigh, signifies *to immerse, to infix, to affix, to impress*. It is used in Exod. 15. 4. "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea." In this instance the word *drowned* answers to the Hebrew word held in view. And in that case there was an immersion indeed. But it was different from the act of dipping, which is to depress and then to raise up;—but the Egyptians sunk, as there to remain.

It is used also in 1. Sam. 17. 49. relative to the stone which David cast at Goliath; "it sunk into his forehead." David threw the stone with such force that he *infix*ed it in the forehead of the Philistine champion.

It is used also in Prov. 8. 25. and is there translated *settled*, "before the mountains were settled," that is, before the mountains were *fixed*. But in this there is *not an immersion*; for the mountains *rise above* the common surface of the surrounding earth. Whether they are represented as settling in, or as affixed to the common surface; yet this is plain, they are not immersed, are not sunk beneath the common surface.

In some other instances it is rendered as conveying the idea of sinking, as when Jeremiah was let down into the miry dungeon, he *sunk* into the mire, though it is obvious he was not wholly immersed therein; for

* Defined by Shindler and Leigh, "*Immersus, infixus, affixus, impressus fuit.*"

if he had been, he must have been suffocated. See Jer. 38 chap. He might settle in the mire in some measure till he was relieved by Ebed-melech.

Hence we perceive this word *does not necessarily imply* an-immersion; though an immersion *may* be expressed by it.

Further; the word (thymykata) which, in the Ethiopic version, is used for *baptism*, is represented as meaning anciently what we term *a branding*, (qui olim peragi solebat cum inusto stigmate), "which anciently was wont to be performed with a mark burnt in."*

Yet, in Mark 7. 4. and Heb. 9. 10. it is used for *washing*; that is, those uses, or applications of liquids there referred to.—And hence we infer, there might be an *application* of liquid to a substance, as well as the *sinking* of a substance in a liquid; for the verb (thamaka) is defined, as signifying *to affix, or impress*, as well as *to infix, or immerse*.

Now, if we reflect on these terms with reference to the design of baptism, considering the baptized, as *infix*ed, or *instated* in the Church of Christ on earth, and view baptism as a *mark* or *seal*, appointed by Christ to be set on his flock for distinction, the terms may appear not ill chosen.

One version more we shall take notice of, which is the Persic. In this version, the

* See Dr. Castle's Lexicon.

word* used to convey the idea of baptizing appears, for aught I have found respecting it, to signify no more than *to wash*, which is not confined to the mode nor quantity affected.

An instance or two of the use of it may be sufficient. See Genesis 18. 4. "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and *wash* your feet." Also in Exod. 2. 5. "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to *wash* herself at the river."

Here the term is used answering to the word *wash*, and is elsewhere used in like manner; and it appears *immaterial*, as to the signification of the term, whether the washing is extended to the whole body, or substance, or only to a part. Therefore the use of this term, respecting the ordinance of baptism, *does not confine* the administration to the act of dipping, nor to the washing of the whole body, though it does not *prohibit* either, but leaves full liberty; as we may wash *wholly* or in *part*, with dipping or without.

We now proceed to notice a few expressions in Scripture which some worthy men have considered as alluding to, and calculated to elucidate, the mode of baptizing. The words in Rom. 6. 4. have been adduced as evidential of baptizing by immersion. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death."

The root, that is, the infinitive mood, is *shustan*.

According to the Arabic and Ethiopic versions it is, "his death." And this I conclude was the Apostle's idea; "therefore we are buried with him by baptism into (his) death." As much as to say, as we are baptized into his death, we are consequently to be considered as *baptized into his burial*.

But let us reflect on the premises, from which the Apostle draws the conclusion cited, and see if they prove any thing, as to the mode of baptism. In the preceding verse the Apostle says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?"—Here it is plain he speaks of baptism in general, not of the mode. He describes the consequence of baptism; for he points out the baptized as being baptized into Jesus Christ and into his death.

They who are baptized by the holy Spirit, are brought into a saving union with Christ, and may be considered as members of his body or true, spiritual church. And it is natural to consider the *members* of the body, as *living, dying, buried, or rising with the Head*. And hence, as the baptism of the holy Spirit brings the subject into Christ, it may also, of consequence, be said, it brings him into his death. And the figure may be carried on, and by the same consequence therefore he is buried with Christ.

By baptism. That is, the subject of this spiritual baptism is not only introduced into Christ, but into his death; and, as he is introduced into his death, by being baptized, he is also introduced into his burial. And outward baptism is an emblem of the spiritual, and serves to bring the subject of it into the visible church;—and, there being no evidence to the contrary, the baptized person is considered, in a judgment of charity, introduced into Christ, as a member of his body; and hence, as brought into a participation of Christ's *life, death, burial, and resurrection.*

The baptized should be attentive to this consideration, and hold in constant view the propriety that, as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so they should walk in newness of life.—

“Christ died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.” And those who are brought into a visible union with him, should evidence their participation in his life, death, burial, and resurrection, by ceasing from sin, and by living in the practice of holiness.

Now, is there any thing here to prove in *what mode* baptism should be performed? For my own part, I confess, I cannot perceive any proof of any one mode in distinction from another.

We readily grant that, as the primitive Christians were baptized, they were baptized in some mode; but what that partic-

ular mode was, I think the premises laid down by the Apostle do not prove.

Let us state some other premises and draw the natural conclusion, and also propose a forced one.

For example. Every man who is capable, ought to be useful.

The man A-b is capable of being useful ;

Therefore the man A-b ought to be useful.

Here the conclusion that, the man A-b ought to be useful, is to be supposed or proved by the premises laid down, as it is stated that, he is capable of being useful. Therefore it follows that, this particular man A-b ought to be useful. But if, from these premises we say, therefore the man A-b ought to practise physic, this would be a forced conclusion, as the premises do not prove it. The premises point out that every man who is capable ought to be useful, but do not describe the particular way or mode in which he ought to be useful.— Some may be useful in one way, and some in another. Nor do the premises point out that the man A-b is capable of the practice of physic, or if he were, that he ought to be useful in that branch of business in particular. But the premises are stated in general terms, unconfined to any particular mode. And in like manner, the conclusion may be drawn in general terms, respecting that which the premises prove.

Thus, when the Apostle suggests, that by way of query, that the baptized into Christ were baptized into his death, he speaks of baptism itself, and that in general terms, not of the *mode*, and brings into view a consequence of baptism, namely, that those who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death. But, saying they who were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death, does not point out in what particular mode they were baptized. It appears the Apostle was treating of baptism and the consequences of it, in his premises, therefore, in the conclusion, he could speak with respect to baptism and the consequences of it, and support the conclusion by the premises.

As the baptized are considered as being brought into a visible union with Christ by baptism, they are consequently considered as baptized into his death; and as they are brought into a participation of his death by baptism, they are also of consequence brought into participation of his burial, by being baptized into his death. But, while it appears to me that this and such like expressions of the Apostle do not, and that they were not designed by him to prove, or point out, that the baptized were baptized by being buried in the water, that is, by being immersed therein; yet, on the other hand, they do not prove they were baptized by pouring or sprinkling. As the premises respect baptism and the conse-

quence, so does the conclusion. And we must attend to proper means to find out what it is to *baptize*, and then we may determine when a person, as to the outward ordinance, may be considered as baptized into Christ, into his death and into his burial; that is, buried with him by being baptized into his death.

While we attend to the figurative expressions in Scripture; we should be cautious respecting the reducing of every expression, or word, to a literal sense. Another instance or two from the same Apostle see in Colos. 2. 14. where speaking with respect to Christ, he says, "Blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Now, from this shall we conclude that Christ took the ceremonial law, blotted out the writing, and nailed the blotted roll to the cross on which he suffered?—Surely not. But Christ by his sacrifice brought the ceremonial law to its close.—He was nailed to the cross himself in a literal sense, but not the ceremonial law.

Also, in Heb. 7. 9. the same Apostle speaks figuratively of Levi (that is, the tribe of Levi) as paying tithes in (by or with) Abraham, to Melchisedec; though it was Abraham who paid these tithes long before Levi existed. But as Levi descended from Abraham, the Apostle considers him as involved in Abraham and thus pay-

ing tithes in or by him his natural head, or representative. But to suppose Levi personally paid tithes to Melchisedec, would be far from the Apostle's design. And it is true that Christ died, and was buried in a literal sense, and they who are baptized into him, being considered as thereby united to him, may be figuratively represented as baptized into his death; and consequently as *buried* with him, by being baptized into his death, let the mode of baptizing be what it may.

Further; some have introduced those expressions relative to the saving operations of the holy Spirit, as allusions to the mode of baptism, by *pouring out*, *shedding forth*, and such other acts as are expressed in these representations. But I do not find that these expressions were designed to fix, or limit the mode of outward baptism.

Perhaps it may be asked, is there not historical information handed down of what was the ancient practice in this respect? In answer, there may be collected some sketches which afford some measure of satisfaction.

The first instance of baptism or washing as a sign of cleansing, of divine appointment, which I at present recollect, was at mount Sinai. And as to the washing of persons, we find that Aaron and his sons were to be *washed* at their consecration as well as anointed and sprinkled. With respect to their being washed, that the Hebrew

word does not appear to confine to a particular mode, yet I conclude it was the opinion of Jonathan Ben Uziel that Moses *dipped* them. This Jonathan Ben Uziel wrote a Chaldee Paraphrase on a considerable part of the Old Testament. And from what I have found respecting the time in which he lived, I rather suppose it was in the century preceding the birth of Christ. In this Paraphrase on Exod. 29. 4. where according to the original it is, as in our translation, "and thou shalt wash them with water," he renders it by terms which I think are most naturally rendered, "and thou shalt *dip* them."* Whether this was a fact or not, I conclude that Jonathan had by some means such a tradition. But let it be remembered that the Israelites were then in an hot climate, and it might be matter of choice to wash by dipping. And after they came into the land of Canaan they were also in a warm climate, where immersion might be convenient and refreshing at times, for a great part of the year. And it appears to have been the opinion of Maimonides, a later Jewish writer, that the Jews practised immersion in some of their cleansings, as well as at the receiving of proselytes whom, it is said, they baptized, and not only the adults, but commonly the children with their parents, and that they would not baptize those proselytes unless in water sufficient for immersion §

* Vetheetböl jauthhōn.

§ See Pool's Synopsis, Matt. 3. 6.

It appears to have been Pool's opinion that John the Baptist and the primitive Christians baptized by immersion, when and where convenient, but not in all cases. He makes an exception when they baptized in *houses* and synagogues.*

Professor Stock, in his *Lexicon* for the Greek Testament says (*olim aqua baptizandis copiose affundebatur, vel illi penitus in aquam immergebantur*). In English, thus, "anciently water was copiously *poured* on the head of the baptized, or they were quite immersed into the water."

Professor Pareus (of Heidelberg in Germany) in a body of Divinity, published in the year 1621, part 2d page 370 says to this import. "Those in the East were dipped entire into the water. Those in the North, in the colder regions, are for the most part *sprinkled* with water. But there is but little placed in this, provided there is a walking with (or by) water performed.—For a *washing* is baptism. But a washing is performed in each mode, both by immersing into the water, and by *sprinkling* with water."

He also represents *baptism* as signifying a *dipping*, a *washing*, from the verb baptizo

* See his Synopsis, John 3. 23.

§ "Orientales toti in aquam mergebantur. Septentrionales in regionibus frigidioribus aqua fere adsparguntur. Sed in hoc parum est situm; modo fiat ablutio per aquam. Ablutio enim est Baptismus.—Fit autem ablutio utroq. modo, et immergendo in aquam, et adspargendo aqua."

which is from baptō, *to dip, or plunge, to dip, or tinge, to wash, to sprinkle.**

Dr. John Edwards of the church of England says, relative to dipping, "It is true, this was the general practice in the Apostles' times and in the primitive ages of the church." And further, he not only relates that such was the general practice, but he points out that there was not a confinement to dipping. He relates that St. Lawrence baptized a soldier (Romanus by name) with a pitcher of water. And that he baptized another person (named Lucillus) and says he, "tis expressly said, he poured out the water upon his head."†

And we may see from a sketch of St. Cyprian's letter to Magnus, about the year 256 of the Christian era, that he allowed of *sprinkling* persons who were confined to their beds by sickness, even in the warm climate of Africa, and said, "The sacrament was equally efficacious, whether the person was *plunged* in the water or had it *sprinkled* upon him."§

* "Baptismus et baptisma;mersio,ablutio,a verbo baptizō quod est a baptō, *merge, tingo, abluo, adpergo.*"

† See his Theologia Reformata, vol. 1. page 574 and 575.

§ See Edward's Ecclesiastic History page 614.

Echard also in his history informs us, page 599, that "Novatian had been formerly a Pagan Philosopher, who being dangerously ill, had been baptized in his bed and afterwards was ordained priest, though not without opposition from clergy and people, it being, as they said, contrary to the orders of the church

Hence we perceive from historic information that, while in the warm climates baptism was commonly performed by *dipping* in the primitive ages of the church; yet that persons were not *confined* thereto. And hence it appears that they did not consider immersion and *that only*, as baptism, but they could baptize by dipping or innering, and also by the *application* of water. They, as well as we, must know there is but one ordinance of baptism in the church of Christ. And it appears they did not consider the administration of baptism in different modes as making more than one ordinance of it.

Here we may make a moment's stand, and reflect that, from what has been advanced, it appears baptism *is not to be considered as confined* to the act of dipping, tho' the term admits of that mode as well as any other.

And while the information produced from history leads us to conclude that this ordinance was commonly administered, in the primitive ages of the church, in the warm climates, by *dipping*, what shall we hence conclude? Does the custom which was practised in them bind us to the same mode? I do not conceive that to be binding.

that any should be ordained who had been baptized after that manner."

From the history I conclude that this event was about the middle of the *third century*; and that, there were *some* who opposed Novatian's being *ordained in the ministry* on account of the *mode* in which he was baptized, yet that he *was ordained*.

For, vast multitudes of the human race inhabit cold climates, where the practice of *dipping* must be inconvenient and even dangerous in many cases, during a great part of the year. If those in the warm climates choose immersion, which in general may be convenient for *them*, must those in the cold regions of the North be compelled to follow their example? I think not, unless the Law-giver enforced it, which does not appear to be a fact.

There may be practices in the warm climates well adapted to the situations of those whose lot is there cast, which would be almost, if not absolutely, intolerable for those in the North in the inclement seasons.

When Israel were in the wilderness, they were strictly forbidden to kindle a fire in their habitations on the Sabbath; see *Exod. 35: 3*, where the prohibition is plain, "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day." Now it is evident this prohibition was well adapted to their situation, being in a hot climate where they had need of a cooling shade to refresh them, rather than of a fire to warm them. But had they been in the North of Russia, or such other cold climate, and in the inclement seasons of the year, can we suppose that prohibition would have taken place? Would the Most High, the God of mercy, have exposed the aged and infirm, the infant and helpless, to the severities of the season and climate, without that com-

mon-relief? Let every attentive person satisfy himself in this case.

But he who appointed the laws of religion had also appointed the laws of nature, and well knew the situation of his people, while he denied them the use of fire in their habitations on the Sabbath.

While we attend to the idea of the ordinance of baptism, considering the command to baptize *admitting*, though *not insisting* to immersion, and that it was common, though not in all cases practised, in the primitive ages of the church, even in the warm climates, to baptize by immersion, shall we hence infer that it is absolutely requisite those in a far different situation should follow that practice, at all seasons and in all cases? It appears there is not sufficient foundation for such conclusion.*

* John Calvin, in his Institutes, published in 1536, page 315, says thus, "Cœterum, mergaturne, totus qui tingitur, idque ter an semel, an infusa aqua aspergatur minimum refert; sed id pro regionum diversitate ecclésiis liberum esse debet."

"Quamquam & ipsum baptizandi verbum mergere significat, et mergendi ritum veteri ecclésiæ observatum fuisse constat."

Translation "But whether he who is tinged" (that is, he who is baptized) "is plunged entire, and that three times or once, or is only sprinkled, the water being applied (or poured on) is of very little importance; but that ought to be free to the churches on account of the diversity of the regions;" (that is, on account of the diversity of the climates.)

"Although both the word itself of baptizing signifies to dip, and it is manifest that the rite of dipping was observed by the apostolic church."

Remark.

But as we draw to a close, let us turn our attention to one authority more and receive instruction from One, even the Sun of Righteousness, before whom we must all appear to give account of our conduct.

It is well known, from Exod. 19 chap. that when Israel were at mount Sinai and Jehovah was about to give the law to his people, Moses being on the mount was directed of God to go unto the people and sanctify them, and "let them wash their clothes and be ready against the third day; for on that day the Lord would descend in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai." And Moses, attentive to his duty, went down to the people to carry the divine mandate into execution.

This was a special direction to the people, not an ordinance to be performed in a stated course, but on that particular occasion, when such a scene was approaching as mortals before never beheld. God was about to display his glory in the view of the people, in the promulgation of his sacred law.

And when the Prince of Peace was about to make his public appearance for the work of redemption, it might with propriety be expected that there would be a direction from heaven to the people to prepare, to be in readiness for that solemn and important event. Though the Redeemer did not

Remark. It is granted, the word referred to is sufficiently extensive to admit the act of dipping, but as already shown is not confined to that act.

design to make his public appearance amidst the thunders of Sinai, but clothed with humility; yet it might well be expected, the people would be summoned to sanctify themselves, and be in readiness for an event so interesting and solemn. And we find that God raised up John, the Baptist, of the lineage of the Levitical priesthood, a man "filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb," who should turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He was appointed of God to go before the Saviour "in the spirit and power of Elias." When the time drew near that Christ was to enter on his public ministry, John, his harbinger, entered on his, which appears to have been a special ministry. Being of the Levitical lineage, a service in the sanctuary devolved on him of course, yet God appointed him a special work, and he, obedient to the divine will, engaged therein, "preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," John proclaimed, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And St. Mat. 3. 5, 6. informs, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." He not only called on the people to repent, and baptized vast multitudes, but also informed them, Mat. 3. 11. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I

am not worthy to bear ; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

Thus, while John was engaged in his special ministry, he gave information of the approach, not only of the kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation, but also of the approach of him who was from above, and would display the gospel kingdom.— The work John was employed in, was preparing for the opening of the gospel dispensation. While John was endeavouring that the people might be in readiness for the public manifestation of the Messiah, he was convinced that he was then in the land among the people.

In the Evangelist John, 1. 26; John, the Baptist informs, " There standeth one among you, whom ye know not ; he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose." Hence it appears that, John informed the people that the Saviour was among them, but that they knew him not ; and it also appears from John 1. 33. that the Baptist himself did not know the Saviour, till Christ repaired to him to be baptized of him. And when Christ came to him to be baptized, John, the Baptist was enabled then to distinguish him; and, struck with a sense of his own inferiority, at first declined, conscious that he had need to be baptized of Christ. But the Saviour replied, " Suffer it to be so now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.— Then he suffered him."

Christ being about thirty years old, the usual age for the priests to commence in the service of the sanctuary, was about to enter on his public ministry; and though he was not baptized to seal a profession of repentance (for he was holy), yet it appears, he chose to receive this sign of consecration, before he entered on that work.

When Aaron was consecrated to the priest's office, he was washed with water. And Christ, our great High Priest, who came to offer himself a sacrifice for our sins, and was about to bring so a close the ceremonial law, chose to be washed with water. Aaron was also anointed at his consecration, and after Christ was baptized, "The heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."—Luke 3. 21, 22. Thus was it miraculously manifested that Jesus was the anointed of God.

Aaron was affected with blood at his consecration. See Exod. 29. And Christ was also affected with blood, before he completed his sacrifice. While therefore we view the contrast, let us contemplate the significance of the rites, of which Aaron was the subject, at his consecration.

When Christ was baptized and it was manifested that he was the anointed of God, John was prepared to proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the

son of the world." See John 1. 29. The Baptist had been for a time (perhaps about six months), employed in his work, before Christ repaired to him to be baptized, and had informed the people of the coming of One mightier than himself; yea, that he was among them, though they knew him not. And in John 1. 31. he says, "And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." And in the following verses, he testifies that he "Saw the Spirit descending from heaven, like a dove, and it abode on him." And he further testifies, "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

Here let us observe that, through a series of ages, from the time God denounced to the serpent, relative to the seed of the woman, "It shall bruise thy head," the voice of prophecy had predicted a Saviour to come. Many prophets were raised up, who spoke of the Messiah; yet Christ informs us, Luke 7. 28, "Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater than John, the Baptist." John laid the top-stone of the prophecies, relative to the Messiah's appearing, and enjoyed the privilege of seeing him, and had the honour to proclaim

"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Notwithstanding Christ represented John as greater than any of the preceding prophets, yet he added, "But he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."—From which we may conclude, those who are favoured with the light of the gospel day, after the organization of Christ's kingdom on earth, have advantages far superior to those enjoyed under the former dispensation.

When John had baptized the Saviour and proclaimed him the Lamb of God, is it not reasonable to suppose, he had executed the principal part of his charge? We are informed in Luke 3. 21. "Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that, Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him."

Here we may observe, this Evangelist says, "When all the people were baptized," which shows that John did not baptize Christ, till he had far advanced in his work of baptizing.

Still it appears from the 3 chap. of John's Gospel that the Baptist did not close his public ministry at the time he baptized and proclaimed the Saviour. He might continue it several months after, yet it is natural to conclude, he had performed the principal part of his work of baptizing, and was, in a

general view, on the decline after the Saviour was publicly declared. Though Christ, after his baptism, did not immediately enter on his public preaching, but was led into the wilderness, and endured a scene of temptation, in which he vanquished the adversary, yet after that scene, when he saw fit, he preached publicly, and there was a resorting of the people to him. It was soon reported to the Baptist, "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." John 3. 26.

Here observe, though it is said, "the same baptizeth," yet in the next chapter and 2d verse, it appears that Christ did not personally perform the work of baptizing here spoken of, for it was performed by his disciples under his authority. But when it was reported to John, the Baptist that Christ baptized, and that the people resorted to him, it does not appear that the Baptist was alarmed, but he could appeal to those informers as his witnesses that he had said, "he was not the Christ." In John 3. 29 and on, he says, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy, therefore, is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." Hence it appears, the Baptist rejoiced in the consideration that Christ had entered on his work. He

was not only convinced that Shilo had come, but also that unto him should the gathering of the people be. And he taught those about him in a manner well calculated to lead them to Christ, and closed thus, as related by the Evangelist John, 3: 36.—“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

The Redeemer proceeded, selected the twelve Disciples or Apostles for his attendants, furnishing them to publish the Gospel to their fellow-men, and he continued his preaching and miraculous works, till the period arrived for him to endure the agonies of the cross for the sins of men.

But is it asked, how did John baptize? Did he use any particular form of words, such as is appointed of Christ in the evangelical baptism? I have never found that he used any particular formula, or form of words.

From Acts 19 chap. it is evident he did not baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For, when Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus, and asked them, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” They replied, “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” Then Paul asked them, “Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism.” Upon which Paul observed, “John verily bap-

tized with the baptism of repentance; saying unto the people, That they should believe on him who should come after him." It would seem that, Paul then explained to them Jesus Christ; for "When they heard this" (that is, as we must suppose, Paul's explanation of Christ), "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Though John, the Baptist informed the people that, there was One coming after him mightier than himself; yet he did not tell them, in so many words, "That person is Jesus Christ." While he gave information to the people that, the person of whom he spoke "was among them," he observed, "whom ye know not." John 1. 26. And it appears from the 31 ver. that the Baptist himself knew not Christ till he went to be baptized. And hence, as neither *John*, nor the *people* knew that Jesus was the person of whom John was the har-binger, previously to the baptism of Christ, there is no foundation to conclude that John, when he went out preaching and baptizing, taught the people that they should believe on Jesus of Nazareth.

It is true, John taught the people to repent, and taught them to believe on him who should come after him; still though by baptism at the hand of John they sealed their profession of repentance, and their belief that there was a Saviour to come, or that he was near, even among them, *all this*

could not render it improper for them to be baptized afterward with an evangelical baptism, sealing hereby a particular faith in Jesus Christ, as the Saviour who had been foretold, and who had then actually appeared.

And, though it is probable Christ's Apostles had been the subjects of John's baptism, yet we find that Christ, before he left them, washed them himself, previously to his sending them forth to spread the Gospel in the world, in the organized state of his gospel kingdom. In the 13th chap. of the Evangelist John we find that, after the Redeemer had attended to the passover, with his disciples, the "Supper being ended, he laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself. After this, he poured water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples feet." And when he came to Peter, that disciple said unto him, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" Christ replied, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."—Peter objected, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Here we must not charge Peter with stubbornness; for no doubt, he considered that too humiliating an act which his Lord was about to perform. But Christ let him know it was a matter of consequence that he should fulfil the work on which he had entered. And therefore said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." A solemn reply. Upon this, Peter said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and

my head." Peter, now perceiving it was so important an act which Christ was performing, was all willingness therefor; yea not only that Christ should wash his feet, but also his hands and his head. But the great Head of the church did not need Peter to inform him, how far it was requisite the washing should be extended. He was the judge of that himself, and informed Peter, as well as others then present; and also all those to whom his word is conveyed, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."*— And he added, "And ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."

Now, in this act which Christ performed, it is evident he taught his followers a lesson of humiliation, which they should carefully improve. Beside this, we may perceive it was a matter of consequence for him to wash them. But let it be observed,

* Some choose a different construction of this passage, "He that is washed," and add "He that *has been* washed." But this is unnatural, if we look at the original. Still if any prefer the past tense in the former clause of the sentence, let them retain the same in the latter, and it will then stand thus, "He that has been washed needeth not save to have washed his feet." It therefore makes but one washing; and imports this, *at the time of washing, the subject need only to wash his feet as a sign of spiritual cleansing, but is altogether clean.* Hence, a partial washing only is implied.

The Syriac, and Genevan French Versions give the same meaning of this passage.

he held a spiritual cleansing in view, while he performed the outward washing, which is an emblem of the spiritual, and he gave this, his infallible sentence. "*He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.*" As much as to say, *The washing of a part of the body with water is sufficient, as a sign of a complete spiritual cleansing.*

Now, as there is but one baptism as well as but one Lord, but one outward washing appointed of Christ for his church on earth, it is evident there is nothing for us to apply this sentence of our Redeemer to, but that ordinance.

Baptism is an outward sign of cleansing; that is, a sign of a spiritual cleansing. And, as the Judge of all the earth informs us that, the washing of a part of the body with water is sufficient, as a sign of a complete spiritual purification, let us rest in his decision, and avoid judging and censuring each other, for using that liberty, wherewith Christ has made us free. If one chooses immersion, he is not to be prohibited. If another prefers affusion or sprinkling, and that in part, he is not to be compelled to immersion.

Therefore, let all who name the name of Christ, while they warrantably improve the liberty which EMMANUEL affords, display their veneration of the Lawgiver, and treat each other as brethren in Christ, and members of one and the same body.

SOLEMN REASONS
FOR
DECLINING TO ADOPT
THE
BAPTIST THEORY AND PRACTICE :
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS
TO A
BAPTIST MINISTER.

BY NOAH WORCESTER, A. M.
Pastor of a Church in Thornton.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
A QUESTION CONCERNING BAPTISM.

Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.—

Not he that commendeth himself is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth —

And he spake this parable unto *certain*, who *trusted in themselves* that they were *righteous*, and *despised others*.—

SOLOMON.

ST. PAUL.

ST. LUKE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is very well known, that the denomination called Baptists, have claimed for themselves the honor of being the visible church of Christ, to the exclusion of all others; and that they have manifested a disposition to attribute it to criminal blindness, and selfish motives, that all who enjoy the light of the gospel do not embrace their distinguishing sentiments. This being the case, it doubtless behoves every one who is capable of it, seriously to inquire, Why he is not a Baptist? And if, on inquiry, any one finds that he has other reasons than those alleged against him, he has doubtless a right to exhibit them, in his own vindication, and for the consideration of others.

The writer of the following Letters has availed himself of this right; and he hopes that what he has written may be of use both to Baptists and Pedobaptists.

In writing the following Letters, the name Baptist has been generally used in preference to Anti-Pedobaptist; not as being more correct and distinguishing, but because that is the name by which the denomination generally distinguish themselves, and by which they are more universally known.

Letters to a Baptist Minister.

LETTER I.

Rev. Sir,

IN the discourse I lately had with you, some things were suggested, which have led me to serious inquiry. I cannot doubt that some persons have viewed me as inclined to the Baptist sentiments, excepting the sentiment of close communion. Such apprehensions probably arose from the following things;—the readiness which I have discovered in receiving Baptists into the church of which I have had the care; the affectionate freedom with which I have conversed with such Baptists as I esteemed real Christians; my exchanging with some preachers of that denomination; and my attempts to open the way for free communion between Baptists and Pedobaptists.

Nor can I say that I never had any doubts in my mind as to the truth of the Pedobaptist theory. In my younger years, I had some struggle in my mind. This I think was occasioned, in a great degree, by the overwhelming confidence with which the Baptist preachers and writers affirmed their sentiments. But in riper years, I became convinced that great confidence in asserting an opinion is no evidence of the rectitude of the sentiment, nor of the goodness nor prudence of him who makes use of this art to gain proselytes.

The struggle in my mind, however, had probably a salutary effect in softening my feelings

LETTER II.

Rev. Sir,

ACCORDING to promise I proceed to observe,

1. I *fear* to take ground on which I must meet with serious questions, arguments, and objections, which I cannot answer otherwise than by disgusting quibbles, cants, or jeers, or insulting exclamations.

Serious questions, arguments, and objections, I foresee that I must meet, if I become a Baptist. With respect to many of which, I can foresee no way to answer or obviate them by fair reasoning. And from the free use which is made of quibbles, jeers, and exclamations, by some writers and speakers on your side of the question, I suspect that *they* discover, in many instances, no *rational* mode of defence. I think that no man of sense, and due consideration, would make use of the weapons I have named, in such a serious cause, but from dire necessity. To think of being reduced to such necessity, fills my mind with dread. I therefore fear to become a Baptist.

I will not, Sir, pretend that there are *no* instances in which Pedobaptist writers and speakers have been guilty of using such weapons as those to which I have objected ; but this, Sir, I think I *ought* to say, that the use of such things is beneath the dignity of a Christian Minister, inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel, and disgusting to persons of a humble and judicious mind.

Yours, &c.

LETTER III.

Rev. Sir,

ONE ground of fear has already been stated; I will now observe,

2. That I *fear* to take ground on which I must make use of *dogmatical assertion* instead of *argument*, or use arguments which I know are fallacious and inconclusive.

I am sensible that with many people confident assertions have more weight than conclusive arguments; and this circumstance appears to be perfectly understood, and greatly relied on, by too many Baptist writers and speakers. But I have, Sir, either a *natural* or *habitual* aversion to such a method of proving a point. And to make use of arguments which I know are fallacious and inconclusive, seems to me to border hard on *dishonesty*.

If I should become a Baptist, I know not of but two sources of argument, of which I could make use, to disprove the propriety of infant baptism. And my conscience tells me, that arguments from either of those sources must be fallacious and inconclusive.

What is called the *want of explicit warrant*, is one of the grounds I must take. By explicit warrant is meant a plain or express precept, or an unquestionable example. But how could I honestly reason from this ground against infant baptism, while I know that a point may be as clearly and fully proved by *fair deductions* and *inferences*, from *Scripture premises*, as by what is called *explicit warrant*?

Besides, if I deny infant baptism for the *want of explicit warrant*, I must also, to be consistent

with myself; deny the right of female communion at the Lord's table; the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week; the propriety of administering the Lord's supper in a public manner before the world; the propriety of *audible* and *public prayer*, before and after sermon, or before and after baptism. I must also deny the right of any ordinary Pastor or Elder of a particular church to administer the ordinance of baptism; and the propriety of *continuing* water baptism in the church since the days of the Apostles. Moreover, I must deny the right of any particular person, whether Baptist or Pedobaptist, to officiate as a Gospel Minister.

Female communion, and the change of Sabbath, have often, and justly, been urged as standing on the same ground, as to the *mode of proof*, with infant baptism. Now, Sir, I will seriously ask you, whether all the other things, which have been enumerated, do not also, as to the *mode of proof*, stand on the same ground? Where will you find express precept, or unquestionable example, for administering the Lord's supper in a *public manner*; or for the practice of *public* and *audible* prayer before and after sermon, or before and after baptism? Not in the Bible, it may be presumed. Where will you find your explicit warrant for a Pastor of a particular church to administer the ordinance of baptism? And where is your explicit warrant for the *continuance* of water baptism in the church? The whole support of water baptism in the church, at the present day, results precisely from the same mode of reasoning which we adopt in favour of infant baptism, viz. inferences from Scripture premises,

and the testimonies contained in ecclesiastical history.

We come now to the last particular. Permit me, Sir, seriously to request of you to produce *explicit warrant*, from the Scriptures, for *your officiating* as a *gospel minister*. Is your name explicitly written, or your character unquestionably described in the Bible as an authorized minister of Christ? Or have you even *fully and unquestionably* the qualifications which are *explicitly* required of a Bishop, Elder, or Pastor?

Suppose a man should doubt the propriety of *hearing you preach*, and should demand of you a *Thus saith the Lord*, authorizing *you* to preach the gospel; what method would you adopt to satisfy his mind? To be consistent with yourself, in denying infant baptism, would you not be obliged to acknowledge that you have *no warrant* to preach the gospel?

Now, Sir, is it not extraordinary that Ministers of your denomination should so *confidently deny, reject*, and even *ridicule* infant baptism, while every thing you do as Baptist Ministers is *wholly unauthorized* by any such warrant as you demand in support of infant baptism? And while you cannot support *one article* of your own practice, in respect to positive institutions, by any other mode of reasoning than that which you *ridicule*, when adopted in favour of baptizing the infant seed of believers? Is it not, Sir, still *more extraordinary*, that, while the whole of your own practice rests on this mode of reasoning, you should feel yourselves authorized to connect with "*Antichrist*" the whole Pedobaptist church in all ages?

Your's, &c.

LETTER IV.

Rev. Sir,

IN my last I mentioned the first source of argument against infant baptism ; and endeavored to show its fallacy and inconclusiveness. For a second source of argument I should have to bring into view several passages of Scripture, from which it appears that *believers were baptized*, and that, of *adults*, a *profession of faith* was required as a *prerequisite* to baptism : and from such premises I should have to infer that infants were *not* baptized. But I must not act a *dishonest* part to draw such a conclusion when my conscience assures me that no such thing is implied in the premises ? To argue simply from such passages of Scripture, I might as well infer that, in the Apostles' days, *believers had no children*, as to infer that their *children were not baptized*. For neither the one nor the other is implied in the premises.

I will now state a case which may illustrate the fallacy of both the arguments against infant baptism. Suppose I had imbibed a prejudice against the practice of having *little children attend public worship*. I advance the sentiment that no children under twelve years of age should appear in the house of God, excepting when brought in infancy to be presented to the Lord.*

* When Jesus was *twelve years old*, he went with his parents to Jerusalem, to attend the passover, *after the custom of the feast*. These words, *after the custom of the feast*, have probably reference to the age at which children first accompanied their parents to the feast of the passover. This may appear by reading two verses in connexion :

" Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

" And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem *after the custom of the feast*."

In support of my opinion I deny that there is any *Thus saith the Lord* or explicit warrant for the practice in the gospel state of the church. That there is no express precept nor unquestionable example. And, hence, the practice must be unlawful under the gospel dispensation.

For further proof I introduce the second source of argument; and exhibit those passages of Scripture which plainly show that *adult* persons were required to attend, and the examples of their attendance: And hence infer that *children did not attend* in the Apostles' days;—that it was not the design of Christ that they should attend, and that the practice of their attendance in the present age is supported only by tradition, and is *unauthorized, unlawful, and wicked*. Would not many children under twelve years of age be able to see the *weakness* and *fallacy* of such reasoning? How, then, does it come to pass that men of the first abilities among the Baptists, will urge such arguments as conclusive against infant baptism?*

Upon the last verse, Mr. Poole's Continuator makes this observation—"It is said by those learned in the Jewish writings, that till a child was of that age, he was not obliged by the law to go" that is, to the passover.

* You will be pleased, Sir, to observe, that *public worship*, as really as *baptism*, is a *divine and positive institution*; and the danger of deviating from the divine warrant, is as great in the *former* case as in the *latter*. And now, Sir, I wish to address some serious questions, not to the *passions* of the *multitude*, but to your *own conscience*. On the supposition that a person had adopted this sentiment, *that we have no warrant from Scripture for a child to attend public worship between ONE and TWELVE years of age*; might he not adopt the whole course of your *reasoning, declamation, and ridicule*, against infant baptism, and apply it in support of his new theory? The two arguments have already been considered. Might he not, also, urge the example of the blessed Jesus, and dwell upon this topic in a very moving manner? Might he not go into the same course of *vehement, frightful, and*

Should I become a Baptist, while I should have nothing to urge against infant baptism but such *weak* and *inconclusive* arguments, in opposition to these I should have to meet a connected chain of conclusive reasonings, which I foresee no possible way to break or to invalidate.

From the sacred Scriptures it would be clearly proved, that in the gracious covenant which God made with Abraham, and under which the church was formed in his family, and by which he was constituted the father of all that believe, the all-sufficient God engaged to be a God to him and to his seed :

That as a "*seal* of the righteousness of faith," and a "*token* of the covenant," circumcision was instituted :

That as the promise was to him and his seed, so both he and his seed were commanded to be circumcised :

That the blessing of Abraham has come on

censorious declamation, which you adopt ; and with equal propriety apply your *favourite texts* to frighten parents from the practice of taking their children with them to the house of public worship ! Such as the following—"Teaching them to OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU"—What thing soever I command you, observe to do it : thou shalt not ADD thereto, nor DIMINISH from it"—"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams"—"If ye love me, keep my commandments"—"In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"—"Who hath required this at your hands ?"—With as much propriety, Sir, as you apply the last words, might not such a teacher adopt the whole verse, with a little comment ? "When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts," with your *unqualified* children by your side ?—And if the practice of *ridiculing* infant baptism were not too *abominable* to be described, I might ask why the same might not be applied in the case before us, by asking us why we do not take our "*lambs and calves and young cattle*" to the house of God, as *proper* subjects of the ordi-

the Gentiles—that believing Gentiles are heirs of the promise, *even as Isaac was*—that the covenant of the gospel church is the same that was made with Abraham, and the promise to believers the same, *I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee*.—That baptism signifies the same thing which circumcision did, viz. the renovation of the heart, and is the substituted *token* of the same covenant. Accordingly, as Abraham and his household were circumcised, so the Apostles baptized believers and their households.

In support of these ideas, the history of the church would afford evidence that infant baptism was handed down from the Apostles, and that it has been *generally* and uninterruptedly practised in the church, from the days of the Apostles to the present time. From such premises, rational conclusions may be drawn in favour of infant baptism, as practised at the present day. I know, however, that such conclusions may be *denied*; and even *ridiculed*; but, in my opinion, they never can be *refuted*.

With respect to the three households which were baptized by the Apostles, I am willing to admit that there is no positive evidence that in either of them there were little children. By persons of your denomination, this *want* of positive evidence that there *were* children in those households, seems to be considered and treated, as amounting to positive evidence that there *were not*. But it ought to be understood, that there is no *positive* evidence that there *were* children in those households, nor that there *were not*. It is but supposition on the one side, and on the other. We may then candidly inquire which is the most

probable supposition? According to what we know of households, it will not, I think, be thought extravagant, for a general and comparative estimate, to say, that there are *three* households which have in them little children, to *one* that has none. If therefore one household only had been mentioned, the supposition that there were little children in *that* household, would be *threefold* more probable than the supposition that there were not. But as *three* households are mentioned, and as three times three are nine, the probability is as *nine* to *one*, that, in one or other of those households, there were little children.

It may be proper to add, that whether there were or were not little children in those households, it is clear to my mind, from the representations in Scripture, that a household was baptized upon the faith of one person. Your's, &c.

LETTER V.

Rev. Sir,

SOME may suppose, that I have already said more than was needful to shew the fallacy of your arguments against infant baptism; yet I have a desire to exhibit an examination of these arguments in another point of view.

You object to our practice of infant baptism, on this ground, *That we have no explicit warrant.* Whether your objection be proper, or not, depends entirely on the *correctness* or *incorrectness* of this principle, viz. That in respect to *positive institutions, explicit warrant is necessary to justify* our practice.

Now, Sir, let it be observed, that with respect

practice, and you adopt another. In *our mode of practice*, we baptize the believer and his infant seed; in *your mode of practice*, you baptize the believer and exclude his infant seed. Each of the different modes of practice relates to a *positive institution*. Why, then, is not explicit warrant as necessary to justify *your practice*, as *ours*? And have you, Sir, any explicit warrant for that part of your practice which EXCLUDES THE INFANT SEED? Does the *bare want* of explicit warrant for our practice amount to a *Thus saith the Lord* for yours? Or have you a whit of support for this part of your own practice but that of inferential proof?

Moreover, if explicit warrant be necessary to *justify* what we *do* respecting positive institutions, I think it should be considered as necessary to *justify* what we *say*. Will you then, Sir, be so kind as to produce your *Thus saith the Lord* for *saying* that *explicit warrant is necessary* to *justify* all we do respecting positive institutions. Either I am under a mistake, or you have assumed, and taken for granted, the principle on which the whole weight of your argument rests. First *prove* that explicit warrant is necessary, and I will then yield to the force of your argument. But this, it may be presumed, you cannot do from the Bible, either by explicit testimony or fair deduction.

Something farther may yet be remarked, which in my view, amounts to a great inconsistency on your part. For the support of infant baptism we depend on *implicit warrant* and *inferential proof*. This you reject, and demand a *Thus saith the*

you *depend* on precisely the same *mode of reasoning* as that to which you *object*.

In your second argument it is obvious, at first view, that you *depend* on the same *mode of reasoning* which we adopt. You state your *premises* from Scripture, and then draw your *inference* or *conclusion*. It is very true, that your *conclusion* is not implied in your *premises*; but still it is evident, that you depend on the same *mode of reasoning* which is adopted by us.

With regard to your *first* argument, it may not be so obvious to all, at first view, that in this you *depend* on *inferential proof*. I will therefore take the liberty to reduce the argument to a logical form. And if I mistake not, it will stand thus—Explicit warrant is necessary to *justify* the practice of infant baptism: but we have no explicit warrant for baptizing infants; therefore the practice of infant baptism cannot be *justified*.

What is this, Sir, but *attempting* to support your theory by inferential proof? And have you, Sir, obtained an *exclusive right* to this kind of proof, that you deny it to Pedobaptists?

I will now attempt clearly to state my views of the difference between your reasoning and ours on the subject of infant baptism.

On *our* part we state Scriptural premises, and our conclusions *naturally* result from our premises.

On your part, in your second argument you have fair Scriptural premises; but still there is this defect, your *conclusion* is *not implied* in your *premises*. In your second argument, your *conclusion* fairly results from your *premises*, but there is this infelicity attending the argument, your *premises* are not to be found in the *Bible*.

Is it not, Sir, very remarkable, that while you would deny us the privilege of supporting infant baptism by *inferential proof* from *Scripture premises*, you should take the liberty to *assume a principle* for one of your *premises* which has no foundation in the Scriptures, and by the help of this *assumed principle* draw a *conclusion* against *infant baptism*?

If, in the last paragraph, my meaning be not obvious, I will endeavour to make it so by requesting of you *Scriptural ground* for this principle, viz. *Explicit warrant* is necessary to *justify* the practice of infant baptism. Let this principle be fairly supported from Scripture, and the controversy on my part will cease for ever.

Such, Sir, being my views of the arguments *against* and *in favour* of infant baptism, can you wonder that I *fear* to change my ground?

Your's, &c.

LETTER VI.

Rev. Sir,

MY fear to take ground on which I must make use of fallacious and inconclusive arguments, operates against my becoming even an *open communion* Baptist. But when I contemplate the idea of becoming a *close communion* Baptist, my *fears* are greatly multiplied. Hence I may observe,

3. That I fear to take ground on which I must set at nought, as *heretical*, *unauthorized*, and *sacrilegious* proceedings, my own solemn ordination, and all my-administrations of divine ordinances. And much more, if possible, do I fear to do the same by the ordinations and administrations of all the pious Pedobaptist Ministers,

in all ages. But all this I foresee I must do, if I should become a Baptist of the popular class. For what less than this could be implied in my re-ordination, and in my withdrawing from the fellowship of Pedobaptist churches?

4. I fear to take ground on which I must *say* and *do* things which will imply the idea that for many centuries Christ had no church in this world; or, in other words, that the adorable BRIDEGROOM was for many centuries without a *bride* on earth; unless I should admit the horrid supposition that, during that period he accepted of an *Antichristian bride*.

According to Mr. Merrill, "not so much as a single branch of the church, in any place or age of the world, hath ever adhered to infant baptism;" and "infant baptism is peculiar to *Antichrist*."

And according to Dr. Gill, from the eleventh century back to the fourth he was "not able to find *one instance* of an opposer of infant baptism."

It is clear, from Dr. Gill's testimony, that, though a Baptist himself, he could find no evidence of a Baptist church during the space of seven hundred years. And if Mr. Merrill's testimony is worthy of credit, no other than a Baptist or Anti-pedobaptist church is a church of Christ. According to him the whole Pedobaptist church is "*Antichrist*." What then, Sir, is the conclusion which results from the testimony of your two brethren? Is it not plainly this, that so learned a man as Dr. Gill could find no evidence that Christ had a church on earth during a period of seven hundred years?

Many other witnesses might be produced, as credible as Dr. Gill, to extend the period of the non-existence of a church on earth to a much greater length of time, on the supposition that Mr. Merrill's testimony, which has been quoted, is to be received for truth.

I am willing, Sir, to admit, that the ground Mr. Merrill has taken in calling the Pedobaptists "*Antichrist*," is perfectly consistent with the practice of close communion. But I fear, Sir, to take that ground; and in a future letter I shall tell you why.

Yours, &c.

LETTER VII.

Rev. Sir,

ACCORDING to promise I must say,

5. I *solemnly fear* to become a public *reviler* of God's gracious covenant, his church, and people.

That gracious covenant which God made with Abraham, by which he was constituted *the Father of all them that believe*, does, in my view, contain all the provision which God has ever revealed for the salvation either of Jews or Gentiles. And for *me* to talk or to write respecting that covenant, as some of your denomination have done, would border hard on blasphemy.

To speak in the degrading manner which *some* have done, of the ancient church and Zion of God, would in me be abominable slander. And to denominate the whole Pedobaptist church from the days of the Apostles to the present time, by the name of "*Antichrist*," implies such a degree of *reviling*, as in my view is perfectly inconsistent with the christian character.

No two *characters* or *objects* in the universe are more perfectly opposed to each other, than the *character* of *Christ* and the *character* of *Antichrist*. *Light* and *darkness*, *heaven* and *hell*, the *character* of *Jehovah*, and the *character* of *Belzebub*, are no more opposed to each other than the *characters* of *Christ* and *Antichrist*. Therefore, for me indiscriminately, to charge the *holy Martyrs*, the *pious Christians*, and *godly Ministers*, of the Pedobaptist churches in all ages, as being the members and Ministers of "*Antichrist*," would imply a degree of *reviling* which, perhaps, has never been surpassed even by infidels.

An inspired Apostle has classed *revilers* with the most vicious characters, and has assured us, that they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. May I not then, Sir, justly fear to become of *this class* among the Baptists.

I have, Sir, indeed, been an advocate for open communion with your denomination. But I must now freely and solemnly profess to you, that I have no wish in my heart for open communion with any *man* or *class* of *men* who will, in such a manner, *revile* the church and people of God. And I believe it to be a solemn duty, incumbent on all Pedobaptist Ministers and churches, to show their disapprobation of such conduct, by discontinuing all tokens of christian fellowship with such as are *known to revile* in such a manner; until they shall exhibit evidence of repentance.

I wish to be understood that I do not recommend this discontinuance of fellowship respecting all who are Baptists. Many of the Baptists I have no doubt, do, in heart, abhor such *reviling*, and grieve to see that it is practised by any

of their professed brethren. But with regard to those who must be supposed to *know* the meaning of the word "*Antichrist*" and who for *party purposes*, and as a term of *reproach*, apply it indiscriminately to all Pedobaptists, I believe it to be our duty to withdraw from them the hand of fellowship, both as *Ministers* and as *Christians*. For this mode of proceeding I think we have unequivocal and unquestionable warrant, 1 Cor. v. 11. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man who is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a *RAILER*, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat.

You, Sir, or your brethren will, perhaps, plead, that what I have denominated *reviling*, is a *correct* and *systematic* proceeding, perfectly consistent with your close communion sentiment and practice. I am willing, Sir, to admit, that your calling us "*Antichrist*" is consistent with your principle and practice of close communion ; and the most consistent ground which I have ever seen exhibited, on which to support the close communion practice. But this I cannot admit as an excuse for the practice of reviling. To this course of reviling the great body of the friends of God, I conceive you are reduced by your wish to support your close communion practice. But the conclusion which naturally results from this view of the matter is, that your close communion system is a system which cannot be carried into effect, in its full extent, without the most flagrant violation of the principles of moral rectitude.

If I adopt principles which will justify *theft*,

drunkenness, or *murder*, or which will naturally lead me to the practice of such wickedness, am I to be excused from blame on this ground, that my conduct is consistent with the principles I have adopted? No, Sir, If my principles are such as will *justify* wickedness, or *naturally lead* to the practice of wickedness, they are such as ought to be reprobated and renounced.

Charity compels me, however, to grant, that probably many of the Baptist brethren have been led to adopt the practice of calling us "*Antichrist*," by the example of some popular leaders, while they know not the meaning of the term; and have never considered that *Antichrist* is a character at war with *Christ*. For such persons I am willing to admit an apology. But what excuse can be made for those popular leaders, who profess to be learned, not only in our own language, but also in the language in which the New Testament was originally written;

You will, perhaps, farther plead, that the very persons who call us "*Antichrist*," do also call us *Christians*. Very true; and what is the inference, but this, that it is for *party purposes*, and for *reproach*, that they call us "*Antichrist*?"

But, dear Sir, does not your admired Mr. Merrill, in addition to what I have quoted, expressly assert, that "*Anti-Pedobaptists* have always denied that the Pedobaptist church is the true Gospel church, and have ever considered Pedobaptism as a badge of *Antichrist*, if not her essential characteristic?"

On the first view of these assertions, I had some doubts respecting their correctness. I was not perfectly satisfied that you had *always* carried

the matter to such a length as to deny our being the "true Gospel church," and had ever considered us as wearing the "badge of Antichrist," or as being an Antichristian church. And even now, I am sensible that many things have been said and done by your denomination which are inconsistent with Mr. Merrill's assertions. Yet when I reflect on the *general tenor* of the conduct of your teachers towards us, the *manner* in which they have attempted to *degrade* and *supplant* our settled Ministers, to break up our churches and societies, the little regard they have shown to our *feelings* and to our *solemn covenants*, together with their close communion practice, I am ready to believe that Mr. Merrill will be able to support his assertion, that you "have *always* denied that the Pedobaptist church is the true Gospel Church."

But, Sir, I must profess to you, that I am astonished at the degree of *arrogancy* and *censoriousness* implied in the ground you have taken, in calling us "Antichrist," and claiming to yourselves the honor of being *exclusively* the church of Christ. This censure falls, not only on *Congregationalists*, but on *Episcopalians*, *Presbyterians*, and a variety of other denominations.

Now, Sir, suppose that this land should at once be emptied of all the Ministers and professors of religion who are by you considered as belonging to "Antichrist," how small a portion of *piety*, *religion*, and *real worth*, would be left in the land? Is it not to be feared, that scarcely enough would be found remaining to save the land from the fate of devoted Jerusalem, in a prospect of which the Redeemer wept?

Besides, Sir, how empty would be your *book-*

cases of valuable writings on divinity, if all were consumed which have been written by those Ministers whom you denounce as the *adherents* of "*Antichrist*?" You have, indeed, a few writers who would be an honor to any denomination of Christians; and we esteem them highly for what they have written. But how very little, Sir, has been produced by your denomination in *this country*, excepting on your favorite subjects, *baptism and close communion*? Are not the writings of one individual of the Pedobaptists, the *first* PRESIDENT EDWARDS, of tenfold more worth than all the writings of your denomination, in this country, from its first settlement to the present day? Yet, this *godly man* with myriads of others, must, by you, be *traduced* as the *adherents* of *Antichrist*, the grand enemy of Christ.

Consider, Sir, what a *cloud* of distinguished witnesses Christ has had in the Pedobaptist church. How many thousands, *who have laid down their lives for his sake*. How many he has employed as *champions* for the truths of his religion, and as *burning and shining lights* in the world. And, in a *comparative* view, consider how *sparingly* he has bestowed such *distinguished favors and honors* on your denomination.

Is it, Sir, to be believed, that Christ has, for many centuries, *uniformly*, and almost *universally*, made use of the *adherents* of "*Antichrist*" as his *chief instruments* for the *illustration and defence* of the *great doctrines of his Gospel*? But such Sir, is the case, if your pretensions are well founded. Can you deny that a hundred fold more has been done by the Pedobaptist church, for

Gospel, than has ever been done by your denomination? And do you wish it to be understood, that the *adherents* of *Antichrist* have done *more* for Christ than has been done by his *exclusive friends*? Is it, Sir, for the honor of CHRIST to have it believed, that he has been so in *love* with "*Antichrist*," as to bestow the greatest share of his *distinguishing favors* on her *adherents* and *supporters*, to the *neglect* of his "TRUE GOSPEL CHURCH?" GOD FORBID!

It would, I think, have required no extraordinary share of *prudence* and *modesty*, in your writers, to have waved these high pretensions, in hope of a period, in which, what you shall have done for Christ would bear a better comparison with what has been done by those who are denounced as the *adherents* of "*Antichrist*." And does it not behove you, Sir, solemnly to inquire, in the light of Scripture, whether *our adherence* to *infant baptism* agrees better with the *character and spirit* of "*Antichrist*," than *your* ARROGANT and CENSORIOUS *pretensions*?

Unless I shall be made to believe, that, in God's account, *arrogancy* stands for *humility*, and *ensoriousness* for *christian candor* and *brotherly love*, I shall ever fear to become an advocate for your *exclusive claims*.

Your's, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Rev. Sir,

I HAVE still farther reasons to give why I cannot be a Baptist—Therefore,

6 I fear to take ground on which the course of

Should I become a Baptist, if I am a Christian, it is reasonable to expect, that, at some seasons, the feelings of piety, humility, brotherly love, and Christian tenderness, would predominate. At such seasons, I should be constrained to *feel* and *converse* respecting many of the Pedobaptists, as though they were my brethren in the Lord. I should have to call them *Christians*, and the *friends of God*. I should wish to associate with them as such ; and should wish to exchange with pious Ministers of the Pedobaptist denomination, and to hear them preach the *unsearchable riches of Christ*. But when *party affection* and *party zeal* should become predominant, and I should have occasion to vindicate my conduct as a *close communionist*, then I should change the tone of my conversation, accuse them of being *wilfully blind* respecting the order of Christ's house, and the ordinances of his kingdom. By giving liberty to my tongue, my zeal would be increased and inflamed, till the whole Pedobaptist church would be considered as belonging to "*Antichrist*"—Thus those, who in *one hour* would be considered as the *children of God*, in *another* would be *treated* as the *children of the devil*: and all this without any change in any one but *myself*. This gloomy prospect, Sir, has resulted from reading and observation. I therefore fear to be a Baptist.

7. I fear to adopt a theory by which I should be led to employ my time and talents for the purpose of dividing, or breaking up, peaceable societies and churches ; and to use my influence in prejudicing the minds of people against godly Ministers.

I very well know, that your denomination undertake to support, from the Scriptures, the propriety of their conduct in *causing divisions*. Nor am I wholly unacquainted with their mode of reasoning for this purpose; but I am *afraid* to adopt it.

Christ, in foretelling his disciples what would be the *consequence* of his coming, by reason of the wickedness of the human heart, made use of these words, "Suppose ye, that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather divisions." And how often do we hear persons of your denomination quoting this text in vindication of their conduct, as though Christ had *required* it of them to make *divisions* in *churches* and *societies*?—But why, Sir, do you not quote the parallel text in Matthew, to prove that it is lawful for you to propagate your sentiments by the *point of the sword*? "Think not," said Christ, "that I am come to send peace on the earth, but a sword." The meaning of this text is probably the same as the meaning of the other. And why may not the *latter* text be urged in support of the method which Mahomet took to propagate *his* sentiments with as much propriety as your brethren quote the *former* in support of *their* practice in *causing divisions*?

I will take the liberty, Sir, to suggest for your serious consideration, another text of somewhat similar import with those which have been mentioned. Matt. xviii. 7, "Wo unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to THAT MAN by whom the offence cometh!"

Though some of your denomination attempt

to *justify* their conduct in *causing divisions*, by the passage quoted from Luke ; yet as soon as we urge that it is *our duty* to *mark those who cause divisions and offences*, and to *avoid them* ; immediately they deny that they are the ones who cause division ; and affirm, that it is the Pedobaptists who cause the divisions, by having departed from gospel order. In one instance, therefore, you own that you do make the divisions, and attempt to *justify* your conduct ; in the other, you deny your making divisions, and charge the crime upon the Pedobaptists. If this, Sir, be straight sailing, what can be crooked ? Must we not, Sir, suppose, that a person finds it very difficult to *ustify* his conduct, who will adopt such contradictory methods ?

Your's, &c.

LETTER IX.

Rev. Sir,

I MUST add,

8. I *fear* to take ground on which I must urge the *prevalence* of my *distinguishing sentiments* as proof their *rectitude*.

The absurdity of this argument I endeavored to show in my "Impartial Inquiries respecting the progress of the Baptist denomination." But I find, as absurd as it is, that it is still urged by your brethren ; and even by a Doctor in Divinity. I must therefore address to you a few observations on this point.

If the *prevalence* of your peculiar sentiments may be admitted as *proof* of their *rectitude*, it must be for this reason, viz. than in this *sinful world* nothing but *truth* can be thus *prevalent*. If it be as common for *error* to prevail as it is for

truth, then neither truth nor error can be known by their prevalence—But if it be your opinion that the *prevalence* of a sentiment is an evidence of its *truth*, to act consistently with this opinion, you must admit into your *system of truth* every sentiment that is *prevalent* in the world. And must not this, Sir, be a very complex and heterogeneous system?

If *you believe* that the *prevalence* of your *peculiar sentiments* is an evidence that they are according to truth, why do you not admit the same plea in favour of the peculiar sentiments of the Methodists, and incorporate *their sentiments* into *your system*? The Methodists urge the same plea in their favor, and with as much reason as it is urged by your denomination.

Besides, Sir, if it be your serious belief that the *prevalence* of your sentiments is an *evidence* of their *truth*, how comes it to pass that you dare to reject and ridicule the *sentiments* of the *Pedobaptists*? Their sentiments have been, and still are, vastly more *prevalent* than yours.

Must it not, Sir, be true, that in urging this plea the leaders of your denomination have been *remarkably deluded*, or *verily dishonest*? Has not this plea often been urged by those who saw its fallacy, merely for the sake of making proselytes? And have you not, Sir, reason to fear that thousands have been persuaded to become Baptists by this fallacious and delusive dream? I dare not, Sir, venture my soul on such ground.

Perhaps, Sir, I might without great impropriety, suggest to you that I *fear* to take ground on which I should be led to imagine that *all the world* will soon be Baptists, because that *myself*

and a few other *noted characters* have recently adopted the Baptist scheme. But this I shall not urge, because I have a much more serious ground of fear to mention. Hence,

9. I *seriously fear*, Sir, to be in such a situation, and in such a connexion, that I must cry "persecution" under the pressure of a *fair* and *just* representation of my own conduct or the conduct of my brethren.

In my "Impartial Inquiries" respecting the progress of your denomination, I very freely and candidly admitted that, in some instances, the imprudence of Pedobaptists had given too much ground for the Baptists' cry of *persecution*. I am still willing to admit the same. But I think it my duty to declare it to you, as my serious belief, that your cry of *persecution* has often been raised under the *pressure* of most *serious* and *just* representations of *improper conduct*.

Permit me, Sir, on this particular to deal very plainly. Do not many preachers of your denomination very frequently act the part of *aggressors* and *invaders*; enter our societies in an insidious manner, and trample on the rights and the feelings of Pedobaptist Ministers and Churches? Do they not, as though they possessed the *power of absolution*, induce many to a violation of *sacred civil contracts* and *solemn religious covenants*? Have they not, in many instances, done all in their power to excite a prejudice in the minds of people against *godly Ministers* and *humble Christians*? And when these irregular, insidious, and abusive proceedings have been fairly, justly, and seriously represented by way of reproof or warning, have not many Baptists on such occasions

immediately resorted to their cry of "persecution," to divert the attention of people from the impropriety of their own conduct, to excite a prejudice against their faithful reprovers, and to make proselytes to their own party?

In my next I shall give you an allegorical illustration of some of my views. But if there be nothing of a public nature to which it will apply, the allegory will be inexplicable to all but the writer.

Yours, &c.

LETTER X.

Rev. Sir,

ACCORDING to promise, I am now to give you an allegorical illustration.

There was a man in the land of Freedom, whose name was Isaac. He was a good and upright man, and one who feared God, and sought his glory. Having the requisite qualification, he undertook the business of a shepherd. *Disdaining all clandestine proceedings*, by *fair and honorable* means he obtained a flock of more than three hundred sheep. The welfare of his flock was near to his heart, and to the care of them he devoted his time—and from his flock he expected an annual support for himself and his family.

After a few years, Ishmael, a native of the same country, also undertook the business of a shepherd. But instead of going where a flock might be had by honorable means, he cast his eye on the flock of Isaac. And by *observation* or *information*, he found that some individuals of the flock seemed to be *uneasy* and inclined to *ramble*. They were often seen at a distance from the rest of the flock, and appeared to be looking for some open-

ing in the fence, through which they might creep. With *these*, Ishmael soon began to familiarize himself; and after a few days, he made a breach in the fence, and enticed them to follow him out of the inclosure. He, however, allowed them frequently to return and associate with the flock, in hope that others would be induced to follow their example. By such a course of conduct, with other *arts* which he employed, he gained a considerable number of Isaac's sheep. And, not at all ashamed of the course he had adopted, he publicly advertised the number he had gained, and seemed to glory in his acquisition.

Though Isaac was a prudent and candid man, he was not destitute of feeling, nor afraid to bear testimony against such *dishonest* and *insidious* conduct. He therefore, remonstrated against the conduct of Ishmael, and represented it as dishonorable, and beneath the dignity of a Christian.

As soon as the remonstrance came to the ears of Ishmael, he set up the *cry of persecution*. He affirmed, that he was treated just as Christ and his Apostles were treated: and seemed to glory in it, that he was *accounted worthy to suffer for righteousness sake*. From the circumstance of his being thus persecuted, he undertook to prove that he was a humble follower of Christ, and that his principles and conduct were according to the unerring Oracles of truth.

Almost every thing which Isaac did, or that he neglected to do, which had a tendency to secure the rest of his flock from being ensnared by Ishmael, was made a ground for the cry of persecution. One instance of this may be mentioned.

Isaac had in his enclosure a fold where he stat-

edly fed his flock. When he went to the fold, the sheep of their own accord came to be fed. After Ishmael had obtained a part of the flock, and found that the remainder were shy of him, he, with professions of respect for Isaac, and great love to his flock, made an offer of his service to go with Isaac to the fold, and to feed the sheep at his own expense. Isaac had discernment enough to see the object of this proposal, and prudence and firmness enough to reject it. But this rejection of the proposal of Ishmael was deemed sufficient ground for bitter and loud complaints.

Thus, Sir, I have given you the allegory : and permit me to ask, whether you ever *saw* or *heard* any thing like the conduct of Ishmael ? Or do you need Joseph or Daniel for an interpreter ?

I will not, Sir, make use of reproachful epithets, but I will seriously ask *you* what epithets you would use to characterize such a man as Ishmael, or to denominate his conduct ? As capable, Sir, as I am of feeling pain, and as timid as I am by nature, my feelings do not revolt so much at the thought of *burning at the stake*, as at the thought of *following the example* of Ishmael. Your's, &c.

LETTER XI.

Rev. Sir,

IN the preceding letters I have exhibited the principal reasons which have operated in my mind to prevent my embracing your theory, and adopting your practice.

While writing, it was my aim, on the one hand, to make my representations in so plain a manner as to be fairly understood, and, on the other, to

avoid every degree of of misrepresentation, either in respect to sentiment or practice. And, on a careful review of what I have written, I cannot find that I have, in any particular, deviated from my purpose.

But I wish it to be distinctly understood, that in what I have written, which implicates *blame* or *improper conduct*, it was not meant to be applied to all your denomination indiscriminately ; but only to those who are chargeable with the things implied or represented. For many of the Baptist denomination I still feel a cordial respect, and view them as brethren and sisters in the Lord. And indeed, Sir, I am not without hope, that many of those whose conduct has been implicated as blameable, are good people, though led astray by *party zeal* and *prepossessions*. I am, Sir, far from any inclination to denounce you all as the *enemies* of Christ, by calling you "*Antichrist*." I hope I have so far *learned Christ*, as not to render *reviling for reviling*.

I may with propriety add, that it has been painful to me to have occasion to imply such a degree of blame in writing on the conduct of professed Christians. Happy should I have been to have had nothing to oppose, but your sentiment on infant baptism. But improper conduct of an habitual and public nature, is as properly a subject of animadversion as error in sentiment. I have therefore taken the liberty to suggest for your consideration some things which, in my view are highly improper, and which ought to be corrected. But if, in so doing, I have indulged and manifested any *bitterness of spirit*, in *this* I am inexcusable, and for *this* am justly reprehensible. But Sir, I

think you will be sensible, after proper attention, that I have restricted my animadversions to such conduct as is generally known, and capable of the most substantial and abundant proof.

But should I be convinced by you, or any other person, that I am chargeable with having injuriously misrepresented the views, or the practice, of any writer, or preacher, or others of your denomination, you may be assured that I shall frankly retract it, if my life should be spared for a sufficient length of time; and that, I shall not *prove myself a false witness* by REPUBLISHING any *misrepresentations* after I am convinced that they are *false and injurious*.

In respect to the allegory of Isaac and Ishmael, it may be proper for me to observe, that it was not intended to characterize the two denominations as such, nor all the Ministers of either denomination. It was intended to be applied *only* where it may be found applicable. The name of Ishmael was not introduced for the purpose of reproach. I am not aware that any evidence exists by which it can be proved that Ishmael, the son of Abraham, was not a godly man. But as you reject the covenant made with Abraham, which was *established* with Isaac, while we adhere to that covenant as implying all the grounds of our hope, I will not deny that this circumstance had influence with me in adopting the names of Isaac and Ishmael. Nor will I pretend, that, while writing the allegory, I was so perfectly blind as not to discern some glimmerings of correspondence between the *conduct* I was describing, and the *character* of Ishmael as given by the spirit of prophecy.

But what, Sir, have I reason to expect from your people in return for these just and dispassionate representations? If I am to form my expectations on the ground of past experience and careful observation, must I not expect to be *loaded* with *reproach*, and *vilified* as a *persecutor*? and that some, who profess to be *children that will not lie*, will make most abusive misrepresentations of what I have written? Such treatment I do not expect from all of your denomination who may read these Letters. Some of them I have no doubt will acknowledge the representations to be lamentably just and important. But I fear that many others will adopt a very different course. And this, Sir, I fear far less on my *own* account than on *theirs*. I shall probably soon be out of the reach of *benefit* from *applause*, or of *injury* from *reviling*. But, Sir, it is a serious thing to despise reproof. For we have explicit warrant to say that "He that hated reproof shall die."

That the spirit of *reviling* has been too much indulged by both denominations, I have no inclination to deny. It is a sin which, at the present day, greatly abounds in our land; and, perhaps, more than any other vice, threatens the ruin of our nation. It appears to be a sin which very easily begets almost all classes of people. It is a sin which is generally concomitant with all disputes or controversies, whether civil, political, or religious. There are, however, but few vices more frequently and more decidedly spoken against in the Scriptures.

But serious, dispassionate, and just representations of blameable conduct, of a public nature, spoken or written by way of *reproof* to the *guilty*, and

warning to others, do not properly fall under the denomination of reviling or slander; though, by those who cannot bear to be reprov'd, they are often thus denominated.

Nothing, perhaps, is more direct evidence of a *selfish heart*, or a *party spirit*, or unwillingness to come to the light, than for a person, when candidly and seriously reprov'd, to denominate such reproof *railing* or *slander*. Every humble Christian is willing to come to the light, that his deeds may be reprov'd. He is willing to be told his faults, and to have the faults of his brethren laid fairly before them. He will not, when reprov'd, immediately fly into a passion, nor resort to the practice of reviling, nor to the cry of persecution. But he will enter into a serious inquiry respecting the justness of the reproof. So far as he finds himself guilty, he will humble himself, confess his faults, and amend his ways; and he will use his influence to have his brethren receive and treat the reproof in a Christian manner. For a person, when justly and solemnly reprov'd, to attempt to excite a *hue-and-cry*, against the reprover, may be considered as both an *evidence of guilt* and a *proof of impenitency*.

Permit me, Sir, to entreat you to receive what I have written, in such a manner as to evince that I have rebuked a *wise man*, and not to evince that I have reprov'd a scorner. And you have my full consent to use the same freedom which I have indulg'd, to represent the faults of the denomination to which I belong; that is, any faults which are equally common and of a public nature. It is very probable that I may be, in a degree, blinded as to my own faults, and the faults of those with

whom I am connected. But I hope, Sir, that I can with some sincerity say, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities."

But when I consider that some, for whom I have had an affectionate regard, have come forward, and, in the heat of their zeal, have *denounced* the whole Pedobaptist church, in all ages, as belonging to "*Antichrist*" I cannot but be amazed at the *blinding influence of party prejudice*; nor can I but entertain a *jealousy of my own heart*, and a fear that something of this blinding nature has had undue influence in dictating what I have written. Should this be found to be true, I shall have deep cause of humiliation before God and man. It behoves me to look to Him who knoweth all things, and to say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts:" and if there be any of this blinding leaven within me, "purge me and make me clean."—Save me from whatever may wound thy cause, injure thy friends, or dishonor thy name; and cause me to do unto others only as I would that they should do unto me.

Now, dear Sir, with as I hope, real and fervent desires for your best good; for the peace and prosperity of Zion; for more real and apparent union among all the members of Christ's body; and with assured expectation of meeting you and all the Baptist denomination at the tribunal of God, I bid you a solemn and affectionate FARE-
WELL.

NOAH WORCESTER.

MAY BAPTISM EVER BE REPEATED FROM SCRU- PLES OF CONSCIENCE?

WE think not. 1. Nothing in the word of God gives countenance to such a practice. Nothing more is said of a second Christian baptism, than of a seventh, or seven hundredth. The idea of a second Christian baptism is not suggested in the word of God. No denomination of Christians, amid all the varying opinions of the church, have ever adopted such a practice. It is a child of fanciful, and self sufficient individuals. Scruples of conscience, not dictated by the word of God, have no more claim to obedience, than a desire of profit, or sensuality. A man may as well be re-baptized to promote his convenience, or his party views, as to satisfy a scruple of conscience, not dictated by positive Scripture authority. God has given but one rule of action; this is not conscience, but his revealed law. Many ways may seem right unto a man's conscience, and yet be the ways of death.

2. The difficulties, not to say impracticability of this system render it extremely doubtful. Though in some instances the opinion against the persons concerned might be general; yet, who made them judges of another man's conscience and heart, judges of an administration, visibly performed in a right manner, by persons duly authorized? What a vast majority of cases would be satisfactory, or only doubtful to most persons, where some would instantly condemn. Every individual must then judge for himself. What a field is here in which ignorance, prejudice, resentment, and enthusiasm, may spread their desolating fires. What an engine of chaos in the churches. How often does an humor of peevishness, or even sadness, diffuse a sackcloth of darkness over an excellent character. This excellence may again be recognized, when the gloom of ill nature subsides; but, before this takes place, he is rebaptized. It was his parent or minister with whom he was displeased, and during the paroxysm of his displeasure, he imagined the validity of his baptism destroyed. What must he now do? go, and be unbaptized? It will instantly be replied, not for passion nor gloom; but for a conscientious scruple must a person be rebaptized. But, who shall decide? It is common for men to make most solemn professions of conscience, when their friends view them under the influence of passion. In this case how shall the minister exculpate himself, who rebaptizes, while probably he has good hope of the parent or minister, first concerned in the administration? Is his conscience nothing? Shall he not be allowed to obey his convictions of propriety and duty? Shall the second baptism depend on the compound conviction of the person and minister? In its very nature is it not a presumptuous, wicked, and impracticable office to deter-

heart to administer baptism, and our parents to offer us in baptism?

3. A second baptism destroys the first; this practice would destroy infant baptism. If one person may be baptized a second time on account of some scruple in his mind, another may, and every body may. Of what validity, authority, or importance, is that ordinance, which any person may invalidate and destroy at pleasure, according to his will, or scruple of conscience? Why should a man baptize his household, as was customary in the days of the apostles? they may, when advanced in life, deny this baptism. Is not this sacred trifling, a gross profanation of the ordinance? It relieves no difficulty to say such a custom is not *remotion*, and *finite* harm can be done. It may be common, and if this question be affirmatively answered, it may with propriety become common, if worldly interest, caprice, or fashion shall offer a temptation; for scruples of conscience, not dictated by the word of God, have their origin in some such selfish affection. In such a case a person would not be merely permitted, but compelled to deny his infant baptism. It is as dream equally absurd to suppose men may choose respecting duty. If a person may be baptized again in any given instance, he *must* be. For a man to suppose he is at liberty to do a thing, and at liberty not to do it, is to make himself his own inclination, the rule of his duty. This indeed seems to be the wickedness of the system we oppose. It supposes baptism, not founded on the immutable principles of God's word, but on the scruples of men, which may vary and change every hour of their lives.

4. The doctrine of re-baptizing makes the validity of the ordinance depend on the subsequent views of the subject. If a person supposes he has been baptized aright, then he has; if he suppose it was an empty formality, then it was; it was no baptism. The validity of baptism depends on the subsequent scruple, opinion, whim, or caprice of the subject. Such a person might more consistently at once avow himself an anabaptist. No parent nor minister can determine, that the administration was proper, valid baptism; for they know not what fancy or scruple may afterwards direct the views of the child. Is not this infinitely degrading the holy ordinance of baptism, making it the creature of fancy and imagination?

5. On the supposition, that known sincerity of heart is necessary in the agents to constitute real baptism, no person can ever be certain, that he has been duly baptized; for no man can ever know the heart of his minister or parents. He will, therefore, always have some ground for apprehension, for fear, and serious anxiety. To gain deliverance from this melancholy uncertainty, prudence would dictate a second baptism to every man. So is infant baptism torn up by the roots and destroyed, by re-baptizing. Here another insurmountable difficulty occurs. The person re-baptized cannot know the heart of the minister. From this evil there is no deliverance, but a new

baptism, as often as he doubts his minister's or his own goodness. This is a legitimate consequence of the system. The scruple, which justifies a second baptism, will equally justify a thousand baptisms of the same person. The scruples, which suggest the practice, are so indefinite, so general, and so uncertain, that they admit no precise limits. The man who is re-baptized to-day, because his parents were not sincere in their dedication of him, may find it equally necessary to be baptized again to-morrow, on account of his own insincerity to-day; the next day he may discover he was not sincere the day before: so may he proceed in daily baptisms as long as he lives. The man who is re-baptized because the first minister, who baptized, was not an orthodox or sincere disciple of Christ, may very soon be convinced that the second minister is a worse man than the first; he may be equally disappointed in the third, in the fourth, and in the four thousandth. He is bewildered in a melancholy labyrinth: in a dark night of error, he is lost in boundless chaos, without one star of reason or Scripture to guide his course, or to cheer the horrid gloom.

To say these are extravagant cases, which will never happen, is to say nothing to the purpose. If these things do not happen, it is merely because human folly and absurdity have some bounds; it is not owing to any check or limitation in the theory. The system embraces and justifies all these monstrous consequences. The man, who pretends he will be satisfied with one re-baptism, may as well pretend, that he alone has found the North on the waters of St. Lawrence, while others declare it is on the coast of Labrador, on the Frozen Ocean, and at the Arctic pole. From the whole, we learn how necessary it is to abide by the instruction of God's word. The moment we leave the sacred pages to follow our own opinions or feelings, we wander in a trackless desert, or are tost on the wild billows of error and delusion.

EUSEBIUS.

Samuel T. Armstrong, printer, Charlestown

MR. MERRILL'S
DEFENSIVE ARMOR TAKEN FROM HIM:
OR A REPLY TO HIS
Twelve Letters to the Author,
JUST FROM THE PRESS;
ON THE MODE AND SUBJECTS OF
BAPTISM;

IN WHICH THE LIBERTIES AND PRIVILEGES OF CHRIS-
TIAN ARE RESCUED FROM THE BONDAGE WHICH
CLOSE COMMUNION BAPTISTS WOULD
IMPOSE ON THEM.

BY SAMUEL AUSTIN, A. M.

*"When a strong man armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace,
But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him,
he shall take from him all his armor, wherein he trusted, and divideth
his spoils."*

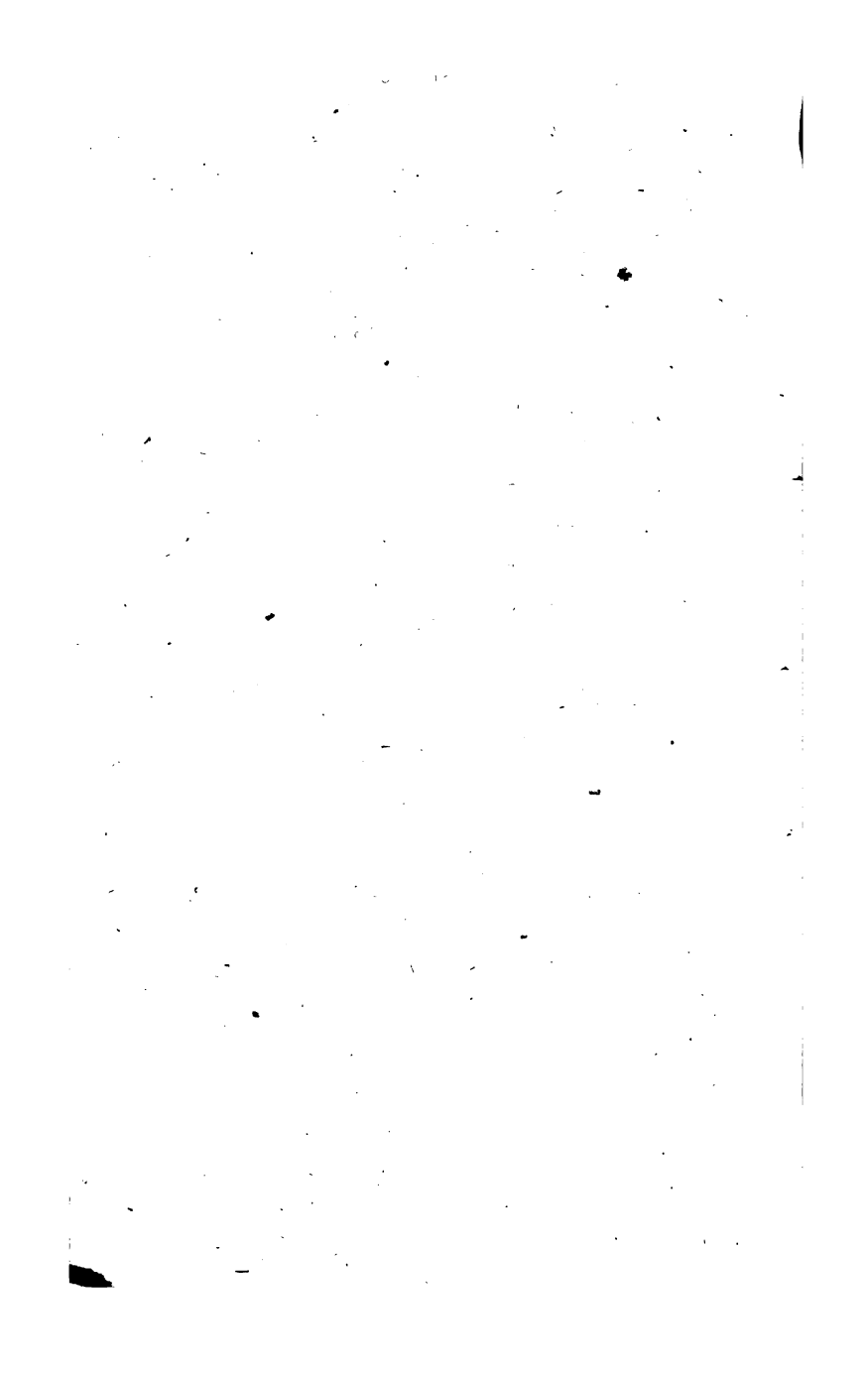
LUKE, XI. 21, 22,

"Why dost thou set at nought thy brother?"

ROMANS, XIV. 10.

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MAY, 1806





MR. MERRILL'S

Defensive Armor taken from him, &c.



LETTER I.

To the REV. DANIEL MERRILL.

SIR,

YOUR defence of your seven Sermons, in a professed Review of my Letters to you, are just received. I have some hesitation respecting the propriety of making any public reply to what you have written; not because embarrassment occurs in any argument or objection which you have seen fit to advance; but because it appears, that the dispute is like to run into personal crimination and party bitterness; the shame of all theological controversy, and

an indelible reproach upon the Christian name. In my letters I carefully guarded against every thing of this kind. When we lose sight of decorum in our personal treatment of each other; when we forget, not only that we are disciples of the same master, but that we ought to have respect to the laws which polished society has prescribed for the due regulation of its intercourse, it is time to stop. But I seem to owe it to myself, and more still to the truth, and to the honor of God's gracious covenant, to expose in a cursory manner, before I finally take leave of you, the impotency of your attempt to sustain the tottering fabric which crumbles at every touch of your hand.

In this reply I will endeavor to remember the relation which really subsists between us, though unacknowledged by you. If any severity shall appear, it respects what you have written, and what you have done.

Much superfluous and repetitious matter will be passed by. All that you say respecting my not having produced any thing to prove that sprinkling is baptism, or that the infant seed of believers are proper subjects, will be unnoticed; because you was taught in my introduction, that my letters "were merely designed to refute the arguments contained in the sermons they cursorily review;

and that I did not profess to collect and establish the evidence which supports the pædobaptist theory." All that you say too about my not being *able* to produce any evidence to justify my sentiment and practice, will be forgotten, as the bold assertion of a man, whose decision, what others *can* or *cannot* do will weigh but little in an impartial balance.

You tell your reader, page 7th, that I have conceded, "that, the evidence for infant baptism does not in our day amount to a demonstration." These are *your* words, not *mine*. I made no such concession. Had you quoted me, your reader would have perceived the unfairness of the representation. I simply said, that *several years ago*, after I had made a more diligent search into the subject, "the evidence, that the infant children of visible believers, ought to be baptized, amounted in my view, nearly to a demonstration." This does not assert a general *negative*, that the evidence *is not* demonstrative. I now beg leave to tell you, that I at present think it is. The other things which you make me concede in this page, are not in my words, nor exactly correct. I do not deny the auxiliary advantage of consulting other writings beside the Bible ; nor the possibility that the present translation of the Bible, may, in some instances, be amended. But the

correctness of it ought, in all cases, to be *presumed*. So far there is ever an objection at the foundation of new renderings.

I shall pass your history of your prejudices, and the noble conquest you gained over them, in becoming a Baptist; and your *thoughts* upon several texts of scripture, which are commonly adduced in support of infant baptism; because we imagine it of little consequence what you *think*, when your *thinking* is not according to evidence.

In page 17th you say, "Should you write again, please to inform me by what authority you *contradict* the translators of the Bible, and injure the sense of this text (Acts 16, 34) by telling us, that the jailor believed in God and rejoiced *domestically*." Is this Christian treatment, to charge me with *contradicting* the translators? I have not done it. I said, "all his house, or *domestically*." The word is not used contradictiously, but as exegetical. And my authority for this is the Greek word, and the connexion. You ask me what I get by telling you, that the Greek participle, translated *believing*, is in the singular? It is not only in the *singular*, Sir, but in the *perfect tense*. It serves, therefore, to rescue the text from your presumptuous comments; which are calculated to make your unlearned readers

conclude, that the jailor's household are said to be believers as well as himself. Whereas the evidence, from the use of this participle, is quite the other way.

I am, &c.

LETTER II.

SIR,

YOUR third letter to me is now to come under consideration.

In the beginning of this letter you make pretensions to candor and fairness; but renounce them both at the very next step. For you make me to maintain, "that *manifest unbelievers* are proper and gospel subjects of baptism. These are *your* words again. I have said no such thing. What I maintain is, that the *infants* of visible believers are gospel subjects of baptism. That *manifest unbelievers* are such, is quite another proposition. You say, this principle is an error; which it belongs to you to refute. From this statement of yours, I have a right to suppose, that, by *manifest unbelievers*, you mean the *infant children* of visible saints. Such in-

fants, then, with you, are *manifest unbelievers*. Now please to turn to Rev. xxi. 8. "But the fearful, and *the unbelieving*, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." Millions of such children, have died in their infancy. Yet you tell us somewhere, you believe in the salvation of some infants, though you will not allow any of them a place in the visible kingdom of God.

Neither have I said that "*sprinkling is baptism*." Here again is unfairness. Where is quotation? You make propositions of your own, and then attempt to refute them as mine. I have said, and will maintain, that *immersion* is not the *only mode* of baptism. But this is very different from the proposition, that *sprinkling is baptism*.

You do not deny, that I laid down your three leading principles rightly. You could not; for I put them down in your own words. As you have expressed them in your letters, they stand thus.

1. "Immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus, or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the only gospel baptism.

2. No person has a right to gospel baptism, but upon his making profession of gospel faith.

3. No person is a member of Christ's visible church till he is baptized."

These sentiments I said, and you are not ashamed to avow the consequence, go to exclude from Christ's visible church "all the multitude of eminently pious and holy persons," male and female, who have lived and died, the subjects of baptism by sprinkling or affusion only, and *merely because* they have not been baptized by immersion. This was my leading objection, and you appear to totter under the weight of it. It is strange it does not crush you to the ground. I should think any man, who had made such a conquest over his prejudices, could not have this army of coheirs with Christ of eternal blessedness, pass before his imagination, after having treated them in this cavalier way, without sinking as low as the most feeling self detestation could place him. You say, "if it be conclusive against my principles, let it destroy them." It does, Sir, destroy them. Let it but touch them, and they vanish like a bubble.

The unbelieving Jews accused Christ of breaking the fourth commandment, because he had healed a man on the sabbath day. And they were not only for excluding him from their communion, but for putting him to death. But I apprehend, that in reason, and according to the clear light of their own

sacred writings, the miracles which he wrought in attestation of his divine mission, and the general holiness of his character, were sufficient to make them hesitate to avow and put in practice these exterminating principles.

The Pharisees had agreed, that whosoever should confess that Jesus was the Christ, should be put out of the synagogue. But it is apprehended, that the amiableness of Christ's character, and of the characters of his followers, their love of the truth, and attachment to his person, were sufficient, independent of all other considerations, to have dissuaded them from making this agreement.

Peter, influenced yet by his carnal prejudices, thought he must by no means "come unto one of another nation," because they were not of the *circumcision*. But it was told him, "What God hath *cleansed*, that call not thou *common*." The character of Cornelius, if we are to be governed by the decision of God, was a full warrant for Peter to hold communion with him. And it would seem, that though he had this ground only for it, he having not yet been baptized, had he refused he would have *withstood God*. For he says, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift that he did unto us, what was I, that I could *withstand God*?" So it is apprehended, that the allowed fact, that God

hath cleansed this multitude of pious persons, and sealed them as his, with the like gift of the Holy Ghost, which he hath bestowed on you, obliges you not to treat them as *common* or *unclean*.

How do you attempt to get rid of this objection? You say, "The manner in which you throw the objection before the public has a very *natural* tendency to give an incautious reader a very unjust idea of the tendency of my principles. He would, *naturally enough* conclude, that I must, if consistent with myself, believe, that no one except the Baptists has any religion." No Sir, it has a tendency to give a *just* idea of the tendency of your principles. You yourself could not be blind to this tendency; for you call it *natural*. He would indeed, *naturally enough* conclude, that you must, if consistent with yourself, believe that none except the Baptists have any religion. For nothing is plainer, than that you have no warrant to believe a person has any religion who has not *the visibility of religion*. For "Ye are a city set on an hill which cannot be hid.—Ye are our Epistle *known and read of all men*.—The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things." And it is equally undeniable, that all who have the visibility of religion, are visibly cleansed, are visibly separated to the

Lord, and members of his visible kingdom. They are so by virtue of this visibility of religion. This last idea you deny, without scarce attempting to refute my proofs of it. But we will attend to it again directly. You say, page 20. "One of our principles is, that no person is a fit subject of baptism, unless he be a penitent." If it is, the greater is your error. But I do not believe it is. It was not Dr. Gill's principle. For, in his Reply to Clark, he says expressly, that "Simon Magus was baptized in a pure and apostolic way." But Simon Magus was not a penitent. Be this however as it may : One of your principles is, that "No person is a member of Christ's church till he is baptized." This reduced you to the necessity of contending, that there may be millions of visible christians, eminently such, who are not in Christ's visible church. One would suppose beforehand, that a man must be put to it excessively to maintain such a sentiment as this. Let us confine it to a single individual. David Brainerd according to this principle, lived and died out of the visible church. He was an incomparably pious man, a more perfect image of Paul, than any modern character. But he had no place in the visible church. His separation to his missionary service was invalid, because the work of profane hands. And had

Sedgwick been the place where his credentials were to be examined, he must have been entirely made over again as a minister. He was visibly of the world, and died in that visible relation. O thou spirit of Brainerd, resting in the bosom of thy much beloved Jesus, dost thou witness the sentence which has been passed upon thee by one of thy fellow disciples in this world? Dost thou hear what is said of thee among men; that when with them, even when thou didst drain the energies of thy nature in importunate prayer, and incessant labors for the conversion of poor heathens, thou wast "*without*, where are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers?

The case my friend Merrill, has its difficulty. To get along with this difficulty you resort to supposition. "Suppose," say you, "there be a reformation at this present time in Worcester, where you reside. Suppose fifty persons of the brightest talents be converted. (We care but little about talents by the way, or at least, this has nothing to do with church membership.) Not one of them has been baptized. By chance I meet Mr. Austin in the street, and put this question. Have these very respectable characters who have been of late hopefully converted joined the church, (meaning the visible church?) Your reply would

be ready. No." I must beg leave to answer for myself, and reverse this reply. It would be, *yes*. What, become converted to Christ, and not join his kingdom? Now, Sir, you may say if you please, that in this "I am contrary from all men you have yet seen." I am with the apostles. And that is all that I am solicitous about. Your breaking up the church of Christ, into little petty detachments, and making it necessary for a man to become incorporated into one of them in order to his being a member of that church, is unscriptural. Making baptism an initiating act is inconsistent even with *this*, and worse than *it*. I appeal to the Bible. It appears you had not well considered this matter. No proposition is more demonstrable. No, not a problem in Euclid's Elements. You are evidently glad to lose sight of the proofs I furnished. But the principle must come down. How do you attempt to demolish it? By mere powder and smoke. You say

2. "Great men and great names can never change truth into a lie." Well said. But great men and great names did not constitute the objection. They were men of undeniable piety, men who were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise; men whom God had cleansed; and whom he had made eminently

instrumental of advancing his kingdom of grace in the world. You say

3. "Your argument against the justness of my principles is not able to prove them wrong." Why? Let us see how you defend yourself. "*Great men, and great names* have no authority to overturn principles which are founded in revelation." Fie, fie, Mr. Merrill. This is but to repeat a poor sorry misrepresentation. You say again, "As to Confessors you have none." And this you repeatedly introduce, and with some exultation, imagining that here you have a capital advantage against us. By Confessors you mean such as have suffered martyrdom for the doctrine of Pædobaptism. I never pretended that we had any. What the reasons are, that we have none, I may not be able to assign. But one reason is, that the Baptists have never had the secular arm at their will. All Pædobaptist persecutions we utterly condemn. At the same time we think your sufferings, so far as they have been on account of your peculiar tenets, have been for nothing at all; and no more prove their truth, than the self immolation of the wives of the Hindoos, proves the correctness of their opinions. You may publish volume after volume on this subject, and your undistinguishing followers may devoutly conclude, *We are the pro-*

ple. And yet, to discerning judges, it will be only marching, without going forward.

You say again, page 22. "If your argument destroy my principles, one of these two things is true, either, 1. That there never were any good men, among any heathen nations where the visible church was not known, or, 2. That these good men belonged to the visible church where there was none. To assert the first would be presumption. To advocate the last, would be absurd; hence my principles are yet out of danger." If they are out of danger, it is because they are as dead as a bat. With respect to the first consequence, I reply, it does not follow. Because a person may belong to the visible church, and yet belong to a nation to whom the visible church is not known. Nay, I will go farther, *he himself*, may have no knowledge of the visible church. Yet he may know that he is a sinner, and needs forgiveness. He may be made acquainted with Christ, and the way of salvation through him, and believe, to the saving of his soul. This may be known to hundreds of Christians at a distance. He may of course be a member of the visible church. For a man's visibility respects what he is in the *eyes* of others. Would he not be a member of the visible church *if he were baptized*? If he

would, then the supposed difficulty, from his situation, is no difficulty at all.

2. I am so presumptuous as to say, that I possess no evidence that there are, or ever were any such good men in such a situation. You should have proved that there are. To suppose there are, looks to my mind, a little deistical. The account which Paul gives of the state of the heathens is this, "Without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world." The second consequence is obviated by what has been already said. Supposing there *are* such good men, they undoubtedly belong to the visible church; and the visible church is *there*, as much as it is at Sedgwick.

You have a curious remark to obviate the self contradiction I charged you with, in what you said respecting John's baptism. Your self contradiction which you was guilty of, is this. You said that *baptism is the dividing line between the kingdom of God and this world;—that John's baptism was true gospel baptism—yet John, by his baptism, did but make ready a people for this kingdom, which was not yet set up.* i. e., gentle reader, an oath of allegiance to the state makes a man a freeman, and is the dividing line between those who are freemen, and those who are not free-

men. A. B. Esq. is employed by government to administer this oath to proper subjects ; yet when these proper subjects have taken the oath, they are but made ready *to be made* freemen several years hence, before which time some of them may die, and never be freemen at all.

Your remark is this : “ It puts my darling doctrine as you express it, not to the least hazard, any more than the peculiar circumstances of the first setting up of Christ’s visible kingdom would, and must manifestly have done, on supposition my darling doctrine were perfectly true. For does not an examination, by an authorized officer, and the enlisting of the examined person, constitute him a soldier ? Yet the first person so enlisted cannot be said to belong to the army, nor can he belong to it till numbers more are enlisted, and the army organized. At the same time these very things, his examination and enlisting, would, after the army is constituted, be considered as the *introductory and indispensable prerequisites*.” Worse and worse ! So then, John’s baptism has got to be at last but an *indispensable prerequisite*. And with respect to the *army*, the first enlisted soldier cannot belong to it, because there is no army organized. Then the second cannot for the same reason, nor the third, nor the fourth, nor the

fifth, nor the nine hundred and ninety ninth. Here then are nine hundred and ninety nine enlisted soldiers, and no army. Yet enlistment is the dividing line between those who are of the army, and those who are not of the army. There is now another desideratum; to know what it is which makes a man one of the army. In attempting to furnish this, permit me to warn you to proceed cautiously. You have abandoned your first principle, and are reduced to the necessity of looking out for another. . It is possible you may be obliged to abandon *that*. Should you say, according to your helping thought, to which you begin to look as a sheltering thicket in your rear, that it consists in his taking his place in rank and file in the army, as an actually congregated body, and as maintaining a particular local station; I shall be put to as much difficulty in this case, as president Edwards was to discern the possibility of the self determining power. It will not easily be discerned how the army can begin to be. This theory, my dear Sir, throws me into great perplexity respecting our first progenitor, Adam. It seems not discoverable how this first father of ours could possibly become a member of the visible kingdom of God, even though baptism had then been instituted as a seal of the promise, and he had been bap-

tized. And if *he* could not, I see not how Abel could, or Noah, or Abraham, or Moses. And when I come down to the gospel day, the same difficulty will follow me. I see not how a church could begin to be even at Sedgwick. This is Christian suicide.

Your assertion, "that my principle brings me to this self contradictory conclusion; that persons are members of Christ's visible church, and at the same time are not made ready for him," excites a smile. This self contradictory conclusion has another origin than my principle. It is a creature of your own imagination.

In what you say, page 24th, respecting the inquiries of my second letter, which were serious to be sure, and which it is apprehended put to flight your doctrine of close communion, your own practice being judge, you do but expose yourself again in the same defenceless manner. But I will be merciful, and not expose too much the nakedness of the land.

Before I quit this part of the subject, close communion, it might seem proper that some remarks should be made upon your attempts, in letter xi, to remove my objections to your reasonings in your letters to Mr. Anderson. Here, however, is little but assertion. There is not much of a trial at proving. It seems

enough for Daniel Merrill to say a thing is so, with a pretty sounding voice, and a great many confident words, and it *is*. Give me leave here to tell you a short story. About a year ago, I was at the house of a minister in this county; and the conversation turning upon the excessive vociferation, which some men practise in prayer; the lady of the house observed, that a short time before, a Baptist minister called upon them, and received hospitality for the night. According to the orders of the house, the minister being absent, he was requested to lead the family in prayer. He did so. But it was with such a straining of the voice as fairly stunned the family, and spoiled their devotions. Having sat a little while after the conclusion of the prayer, the lady took the liberty to ask him, Why, Sir, do you *hollow* so in prayer? Do you imagine the divine Being is a great way off? He replied that he had got into the habit, and had not indeed much to say for it. But in fact, it was every thing to him, for if he did not pray in that sounding manner, his people would not think it was praying at all.

In page 71, you make a very unfair statement. You say, "Besides, it is your sentiment, baptism is to be *observed* or *received* when we are infants, when we know nothing about it. How much serious reverence and

conscientiousness, infants have we know not." Is this fair? Is it honest? You have omitted to mention our adult baptisms entirely, and you must have known that our system *supposes* the passivity of infants in baptism; and I venture to say you yourself did not apprehend that I *meant* to attribute conscientiousness to infants.

In the same page you tell me that I implicitly grant your second proposition, that the actual communion at the Lord's table is to be confined to baptized believers. No, Sir, I have not. Every attentive reader must know that I contended for the opposite. You yourself have made some very illiberal remarks, in page 87, respecting my leaving the too great ordinances of the Gospel at loose ends, in regard to their priority, which are wholly founded upon the idea that I did contend for the opposite. Have I granted with the least implication that communion at the Lord's table is to be *confined* to baptized believers, because I have contended that *we are baptized*? No. There are two principles of proof with me. One is, that we are actually baptized. The other is, that, being visible saints, by your own concession, it is unchristian for you to exclude us from the Lord's table, supposing, as you contend, that we are *not* baptized. Surely the support

of the one, is not the relinquishment of the other.

In this connexion it may be proper in self defence to observe, that you might just as well charge our Savior with leaving the institution of the Sabbath at loose ends ; because, in respect to that day, he vindicated the superior obligation of *moral*, to *positive* law. Such is the kindness of our Maker, that the observation of Christ is as just in relation to baptism, as in relation to the Sabbath. Baptism was made for man, and not man for baptism. The advantage, not the distress of man is in view. Is no allowance to be made for the necessity of cases ; for insuperable obstacles, and for the innocent mistakes of our brethren ? Are acknowledged saints to be shut out of the sanctuary, I mean are they to be denied the children's bread ; are they to be treated as unclean, a very affecting example of which is known at this time to exist in the principal town in the state of Rhodeisland, because they cannot conscientiously adopt your notions of the mode of baptism ? Why do you not be consistent, and exclude us from joining with you in prayer, in praise, and in preaching, and put up the fence so that we can no where get over it ? There is as much evidence that prayer, praise, and preaching were communional ex-

ercises in the apostolic day, and in the primitive church, as that the celebration of the Eucharist was. There are some men, Sir, who have not a jot of oil, nor a grain of balm in their vessels, who yet have infinite zeal about things of comparative indifference. The less determinate evidence there is, the more positive do they seem to be. They plant themselves on an elevation enveloped in vapors; and yet fancy that they only have the seeing faculty. They make a thousand times more *fuss* about the *mode* of a thing, about conversion *to that mode*, and the putting in practice that *mode*, waiting months to give it more publicity, and sending from Dan to Beersheba for agents to be employed about it, than if all the inhabitants of Louisiana were converted to Christianity. There are *seventh* day baptists who will not hold communion with *first* day baptists; and there are first day baptists who will not hold communion with other first day baptists, because the latter feel it to be their duty to hold communion with pious pædobaptists. This, it is apprehended is wood, hay and stubble, because it is opposite to keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Dr. R——, of Bristol in England, breaks bread in the morning to a society of Pædobaptist Christians; and in the evening to a society of Baptist Christians. The lib-

erality of this orthodox and amiable Baptist divine, I wish you to imitate. To vindicate this liberality is the reason that some of my proofs were designed to support the opposite of what you say I have granted.

All that you have said in vindication of your third principle is refuted by the preceding observations. You have still the task upon you to show, how a man is to become a member of Christ's visible kingdom, *after* he has become a visible believer.

To annul your proof which you attempted to deduce from John iii. 5. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." which is your only scripture proof, which you pretend to advance to support the position, that water baptism is the thing which introduces into the kingdom, I said, that according to the words of our Savior, the birth goes *before* the entrance, and cannot therefore be the same thing. And I supposed, which is very evident from the context, and from the passage itself, that by the kingdom of God here is not meant the visible church in this world, but the future rest which remains for the sanctified. To obviate this objection you say, page 73, "If you will be kind enough to inform the public, for how long a time a person must be born be-

fore he enters into the world, then they will possess a necessary datum to understand your new doctrine, that the birth goes before the entrance." Is regeneration then in all cases an entrance into glory? Does Christ say so? Did I pretend that he said so? Just the opposite. Did Christ say any thing about being born into this world? Did I pretend that he did? The comparison is unjust. It is an extravagant fancy of your own; and if it turns any thing into ridicule, it turns the words of Christ into ridicule. You say, "the birth is the entrance." The words of Christ are, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now let us apply this mode of expression to a familiar case. King Ahasuerus makes a banquet for queen Esther, and invites Haman. He orders Haman to be told, that, *except he is habited in white, he cannot enter into the banquet*. Haman puts on white clothing accordingly. Now, is Haman's clothing himself in white *before* he enters into the banquet and *preparatory to it*, or the *entrance itself*? What do you implicitly say to the Savior of the world?

To obviate my fourth refutation, you say in the same page, "Christ speaks, Matt. iv. 17, of the kingdom of heaven, as not having made its public appearance, but as being then at hand." And charge me with contradicting

Jesus Christ in *direct terms*, because I had said, that there were multitudes who belonged to the visible kingdom of God before Christ, who were not born of water. Whereas in the very next clause you contradict your own hypothesis, that the kingdom of God had not yet made its public appearance. For in reply to another refutation of mine, viz. that Christ himself was never born of water, you say, "Had you forgotten, or did you suppose that none of your readers would recollect Mark i. 9, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John *in Jordan*?" If Jesus was born of water, when he was baptized by John he was born into the visible kingdom of God, This kingdom then had a being at this time, of course a public appearance. Yet the words Matt. iv. 17, were spoken some time *after* his baptism. But it is tedious to detect all your sophisms and perversions of scripture. I shall therefore take leave of this part of the subject and proceed to another. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

SIR;

I cannot descend to a minute examination of all that you have said in defence of

your arguments to support your proposition relative to immersion, as the only gospel baptism ; and to obviate the objections I advanced against them. It would be irksome to me, and probably to my reader. I will go so far as, and no farther than appears *necessary* for the vindication of truth. With respect to the matter of alms-giving as a duty, never debated, all that you say seems to be only to kick up a dust to cover yourself under, and to blind your reader's eyes. You know that I expressly spoke of it as a *duty* ; without saying any thing about the *mode*, the *objects*, the *time*, the *motive*, or any thing else. You are constrained at last, implicitly to acknowledge it. After acknowledging it, you make this strange remark. " Should this be granted as a general truth, (viz. that the duty of alms giving was never disputed) it is equally true that there has been as little dispute about the existence of such a Christian duty as baptism." Is this true? Is there not now a numerous denomination of professing Christians, I mean the Quakers, who deny this duty altogether? And if there were not, what would this be to the purpose? Your assertion was *not* that baptism *is a duty* ; but that we have the same evidence, and perhaps more of it, that *immersion is the only gospel baptism*, than we have to support any gospel

precept or practice. Let the reader now judge, whether your confident manner of speaking is fairly defended.

At the bottom of page 26, to obviate what I said respecting the word *baptisterion*, you reply, "Let us for one moment, turn the tables, and suppose that *baptisterion* favors sprinkling, and that the definition of it were, a bason, a porringer, a sprinkling place, a vessel to sprinkle from, would here be no circumstantial evidence in favor of sprinkling?" I reply, none at all; for the plain reason that the word is not in the Bible. Farther, if it should furnish some circumstantial evidence in favor of sprinkling, it would furnish none in favor of it *as the only mode*. But even supposing *this*, your turning the tables is a preposterous thing, and does you no good. For a child might see, that if *baptisterion* were a porringer, and it were appointed always to be used in baptism, immersion would be an impossible thing. Whereas, if it were a vessel large enough for immersion, sprinkling *would be possible*.

With respect to your definitions of the words *baptisma* and *baptismos*, it is wholly immaterial, whether you meant *sacred washing*, or *common washing*. It alters not the case what the *subject* is. To *eat* and to *drink*,

have most undoubtedly the same meaning when applied to meat and water at common meals, that they have when applied to bread and wine in the Lord's supper. All this sort of defence, therefore, I shall pass.

In regard to the *possibility* that in all the texts in which the word *baptizo* is used, *affusion might have been the manner* ; I supposed it, and still suppose it quite sufficient to destroy this sort of proof of your principle. But if you wish me to go farther, I will now tell you, that the proof is not of the *probable* kind. Suppose we were told in five hundred places about *sanctifying* the 7th day, and nothing else were said about it more or less, but just the use of this verb *sanctify*, would this furnish any evidence. *how* we are to sanctify it? No. Therefore, the divine Being has told us *how*. "*Thou shalt not do any work.*" Give us such proof of the *how* of baptizing, and we will submit. In page 30th, with some apparent exultation you quote these words of mine, and several times bring them into view as mightily to your advantage. "There must be some evident likeness between the subject to which a word is applied in the natural and primitive use of it, and the subject to which it is applied as a figure, otherwise there is a gross impropriety in the figurative use of it." You will please to observe, I say *some* evident

likeness. I do not say that the likeness must be entire. But you make the strangest application of this, imaginable. You say, "To be *buried* with Christ in baptism, to be planted in the *likeness* of his death, and to be risen with him in baptism, Rom. vi. 4, 5, and Col. xii. 12, is to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost exactly coincides with this representation." Here you confound the effect with the cause, just as you did before. I observed to you, that the things compared by the apostle were *our death to sin* with Christ's *natural death*, *our spiritual burial* with *his burial*, and *our rising to newness of life* with *his resurrection*; and that, in the language of the apostle, the baptism he speaks of is distinguishable from the burial, the latter being in, or by the former. I repeat it, and beg you would not overlook the distinction; I take these things, *our death*, *burial*, and *resurrection* to be *effects*, and baptism the *cause*. It follows, that to make out your desired object, you must shew that there is a likeness between the *descent and influence* of the Holy Spirit, and our being *immersed* in water; or that it is proper to say, *the Holy Spirit is immersed, or plunged, or dipped in us*. These passages will do nothing towards helping you to this object.

As to what you say, page 33, to defend your proof from the preposition *in*; "John baptized *in* Jordan;" it is too frivolous to be entitled to serious notice. I have a Bible pretty full of plates. In one of them, referring to this transaction, the Baptist and the Savior are represented as standing in the margin of a stream, to a depth a little above their ankles, and John is pouring water from his hand on the head of the Savior. This representation accords, in my view, with the force of the preposition *in* quite as well as if the Saviour were represented as sustaining an immersion; and bears a much more perfect resemblance to the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him. The preposition certainly contains all the argument in the case. And you will remember it is *your* argument, not *mine*. The preposition has respect to the transaction. But the transaction relates to both the baptizer, and the baptized. To me it is no proof at all. For I can suppose either way, and one as well as the other, in consistency with the force of the preposition. I *grant*, that if I had said, the preposition *in* proves that John baptized by affusion, it would follow, that John was affused, as well as the other subjects of his baptism. But I shall take care to say no such thing.

In pages 35 and 36, you give up the word *Louō*, in that point of view in which it could be of any kind of use to you. So we will comment no longer about it. If this word does not *always* mean immersion, as you concede, then, when it is supposed to be used in reference to baptism, it affords no evidence that *immersion is intended*.

In page 38, you observe, "All your objections against allowing that the apostle in Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12, alludes to, and *intends* water baptism, is considered to arise from an apprehension that immersion would certainly follow." You must consider it so if you will. But my apprehension really has another origin. It is, that an insuperable objection would be furnished against the apostle's inspiration. For then he would teach us, that water baptism, instead of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is the thing *by which* we become dead to sin, and rise to newness of life. For all that you have said any where in your book on these passages, I refer you to what I have just observed, respecting baptism being the *cause*, and our burial the *effect*.

I will now attend to the manner in which you attempt to evade the direct and plain proofs I produced, that baptizō and its derivatives *have not always* the exclusive sense of *total immersion*.

The first is Luke xi. 38. I have no great reluctance to allowing you what you express, page 40, so strong a desire to appropriate to yourself, that you are better acquainted with the traditionary laws of the Pharisees than I am. Because this will neither make, nor break an argument. But you must not expect to be allowed *assertions* which the Bible will not warrant. When you say respecting the *second traditionary law*, "When they came from the market, or from a crowded assembly of clean and unclean persons, they baptized themselves, or were baptized, that is, *they immersed or bathed themselves all over in water*," I demur. There is nothing in the Bible about a crowded assembly of clean and unclean persons in connexion with such a law; nor does the Bible any where say, *that they immersed or bathed themselves all over in water*. This has another authority. You bring in these explanatory immersions very often, Sir, as though they must go down, because said by you. When you say, page 41, "that the passage in Luke xi. 38, is, "When the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed, (or was not first immersed) before dinner," by placing these words in a parenthesis, you entirely beg the question. All your evidence for this second traditionary law is the use of

the word *Baptisōntai*, in Mark vii. 4. But this again is to beg the question.

Matthew says not one word on which you can ground the idea of a second law. If the disciples neglected to wash their *hands*, it is not to be questioned but they neglected to bathe their *bodies*. And it is evident that in this total neglect, they and their master were in harmony. Yet the tradition transgressed is spoken of in the *singular*. "Why do thy disciples *transgress the tradition*, (not traditions) of the elders? For they wash not their *hands*, (not *hands* nor *bodies*) when they eat bread." The disciples were in collections of people as often as their master. Yet the fair, and undeniable conclusion is, that if they had washed their hands according to the proper meaning of the word *nip̄rō*, they would have conformed to the traditionary law. It is just so in Mark. The Pharisees objected here also, that Christ's disciples ate bread with defiled i. e. unwashed *hands*. This objection does not respect unwashed *bodies*.

The reasons he mentions were matters of fact. Now I wish you to consider, *law* is one thing, and *matter of fact* another. The latter does not always correspond with the former. Sometimes it falls short; sometimes it goes beyond. Allowing, then, that it was a matter of fact that the Pharisees bap-

tized themselves when they returned from the market, this does not determine the *law*. The objections of the Pharisees are mentioned expressly as having respect to the traditionary *law*. Besides, what is this baptizing, which Mark is supposed to mention as a matter of *fact*? The word he uses is baptisōntai, the very word in debate. You say this means immersion. This is to be proved. But why should it mean immersion any more than *niptō* should mean immersion, when applied to the hands? Did not the hands need immersing when they were defiled, as much as the body when that was defiled? If I were to rest the evidence of this upon human authority, I could easily prove the certainty that they did bathe their hands *all over*. But the evidence is so clear from the nature of the case, and is so congenial with your own notions of a total baptism, that I presume you will not deny it. But the word *niptō* is used by both the evangelists with respect to this immersion of the hands. Yet baptisōntai, upon your own supposition, means this, and no more. Here then you have what you have said you would be silent if I would furnish, your algebraic equation, between *niptō* and baptizōo, yourself being judge. Then tell us no more about baptisōntai's proving a second traditionary law, respecting the wash-

ing of the whole body, or another mode of washing entirely distinguishable from what the word *niptō* is used to signify. But even allowing a *second law*, it respected coming from the *market* only. But our Savior had not come from the *market*. He had come from a collection of people who attended on his instructions. It does not appear that he had any thing to do in this connexion with the *market*. The Pharisee did not find him there, when he gave him the invitation. The evidence then is just where I placed it. It is clear, that when Luke says, "The Pharisee marvelled that he was not first baptized before dinner," he had respect to the *traditionary law* in regard to the washing of the hands.

2. The second proof which I advanced against your doctrine of the exclusive meaning of the word *baptizō*, is the passage in I Cor. x. 2. "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea." Here your reply is founded altogether on the force of prepositions, *under*, *through*, and *in*. Prepositions are every thing with you. But how are we to understand them? Beyond all doubt the declaration of the apostle is founded upon the fact in the Mosaic narrative. This you have not dared to look in the face. You skulk under prepositions, in the hope

they will shield you from the eyes of those who are able to detect your sophisms. But you must come out. You have committed yourself before the public. You have imposed on the credulity of your unlearned readers by indefensible assertions, which you do not support, and must be rebuked for your temerity. This text alone is sufficient to confound all those assertions. The apostle speaks of the whole multitude of Israel, and comprehends every individual; "*all our fathers.*" Now will you undertake to say before the public, that all these fathers, individually, were *immersed in the cloud*, when the sacred narrative says, Gen. xiv. 19, "*and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.*" And it came *between* the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel?" Will you say, that they were individually immersed in the *sea*, when the sacred narrative is, ver. 22, "*And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand and on the left?*" If by the sea be meant, the bed of the waters, that was *dry ground under their feet*. If the waters themselves, they were on *each side* of the congregation, as a *wall*.

Next we will attend to your attempt to evade the evidence presented in Heb. i. 10,

divers washings. You tell me the next three words, *and carnal ordinances*, spoil the conclusion. How so? Allow, if you please, that these words are to be taken in the most literal sense, as meaning ordinances of *flesh*; what has this to do with fluids? Are flesh and blood the same thing? Is the one as much of a fluid as the other? The literal interpretation spoils *your evasion*. The force of the argument, which certainly is conclusive, you have overseen, or put out of sight by your comments on the ceremonial washings of the Old Testament. Baptisms, generally, are performed in, or with some fluid substance; not always in or with water. It is probable that in some instances, as you contend, the application of fluid was by *immersion*; in some cases, as you concede, it was certainly done by *sprinkling*; in some, as in Lev. xiv. 18, it was undoubtedly done by *pouring*. Exactly according to these facts in the history, the apostle calls the baptisms used in the Levitical economy, *diaphoroi*, different. The Greek word is used but in one other place in the New Testament. That is in Rom. xii. 6. "Having therefore gifts differing, (diaphora) according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, or ministry," &c. These gifts are *different in kind*. The qualifying of the word baptismois, then, in

this place, by diaphorais, undeniably proves, that it is not limited to *one particular mode* of applying fluid substance. But immersion is one mode *only*.

And this is quite sufficient to answer your repeated argument in which you seem much to glory, of *one baptism*. True, Sir, there is but *one* baptism. But your proposition is very different. It is that there is only one *mode* of baptism. The *demonstration*, then, which I supposed I had furnished against your main argument, for all the rest is circumstantial, is clear, and stands firm as mount Atlas. To be sure, this is my opinion. Of the justness of it my readers must judge. For this reason, as well as to avoid swelling a book with tedious repetitions on this threadbare subject of the *mode* of baptism, I will pass over without notice all your pretended replies to my collateral circumstantial arguments, in which you appear to me to have done nothing towards removing their weight. I leave them entirely to the judgment of the reader.

To conclude this part of the controversy, on the *mode* of baptism; omitting the much that might be said in favor of sprinkling and affusion, as both warranted in the scripture, and each a more just resemblance of the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit than im-

mersion, I will content myself with one remark, and that is, upon the *impracticability* of the ordinance according to your account of it. I have no respect here to the unpleasantness of immersion, even in the highest latitudes and the coldest seasons ; nor to the case of the sick, thousands of whom are so feeble and so fastened to their beds by diseases which do not permit their removal, that they could not without injury be taken any where to be immersed ; nor to any dreadful cross on account of the supposed scandal attached to immersion beyond sprinkling, which weak Christians cannot bear ; but to the absolute impracticability of the thing in other cases. In besieged cities, where there are thousands, and hundreds of thousands, of people ; in sandy deserts, like some parts of Africa, Arabia, and Palestine ; and in some northern regions, where the streams and the ponds, if there be any, are shut up by impenetrable ices, and in severe and extensive droughts, like that which took place in the time of Ahab ; sufficiency of water for animal subsistence is almost unprocurable. In some cases it is entirely so. Insomuch that millions of human beings have suffered great distress by thirst. Now suppose God should, according to the predictions of the prophets, *pour out plentiful*

effusions of his Spirit, so that all the inhabitants of one of these regions or cities, shall be by *born in a day*. Upon your hypothesis there is an absolute impossibility they should be born into the kingdom, while there is this scarcity of water, and this may last for months, yea, as long as they live. And these thousands and hundreds of thousands of christians, must remain all this while, and perhaps die, without having once the consolation of supping with their Redeemer. Now it must require very clear evidence to convince me, that the essence of baptism lies in that which, in so many cases of this kind, must defeat the very design of it; and that baptism is ever an indispensable prerequisite to the Lord's supper. This moreover is altogether unlike what we find on the face of apostolic practice. I am, &c.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

I SHALL not pretend minutely to review what you have thought proper to say, in your letters, in defence of the manner in

which you attempted to prove that infants of believing parents, are not proper subjects of Gospel baptism ; because most of your observations are wide of the point on which the controversy turns, and because I prefer giving my views of this subject to the public in another way.

There is but little hazard, that your most partial readers will be quieted by the new invention of yours, as much at variance with common sense, and with the explanations of all your Baptist brethren, as with the scripture, that the covenant of circumcision is *but a token of the covenant of grace ; that it is but a mere law, and that circumcision itself, is this covenant.* This is twisting and turning indeed. "The covenant of circumcision equals," say you, "every man child being circumcised, every man child being circumcised equals the circumcising the flesh of their foreskin ; the circumcising the flesh of their foreskin equals the token of the covenant between God and Abraham ; hence the token of the covenant betwixt God and Abraham equals the covenant of circumcision ; for it is a well known axiom that things that are equal to the same are equal to one another." This Algebraic equation, my friend, in pity to you, I will leave under a simple quotation.

You say, page 57, "The covenant of circumcision is but a token of the covenant between God and Abraham." Then it was not a covenant *between* God and Abraham; for the token is on one part only. In your comment upon Gen. xvii. 10, 11, you say, "If you can understand two plain verses in the Bible, you may understand what the covenant of circumcision is. In these two verses we have the same thing mentioned four times in different words; first, God says, *This is my covenant*; (so Joseph says, *The seven ears are seven years*, and our Saviour says, *This is my body*.) Secondly, he tells what it is; *Every man child among you shall be circumcised*, (every man child then is the covenant of circumcision, and the token of the covenant of grace,) thirdly God informs us how this covenant is to be kept. Ye shall *circumcise* the flesh of your foreskin, (then the covenant is the act of circumcising,) fourthly God informs us what is the *end* or *use* of this covenant of circumcision, It shall be a *token* of the covenant betwixt Him and Abraham." So the covenant is a token; and the token is a covenant; and the *end* or *use* of this *token*, is that it shall be a *token*. If I were not yet in my leading strings, and altogether unfit to be any thing but your pupil, I would try

to help you out of this difficulty. But as it is, modesty will permit me only to suggest to you my view of the matter in a few words. I take it that a law is one thing; obedience to that law another; and the effect of that obedience another. It appears to me, that God's requiring Abraham to circumcise Isaac was a *law*; that the *act* of Abraham in circumcising Isaac was *obedience* to that law; and that the circumcised *state* of Isaac was an *effect* of that obedience. Now I learn from the Bible, that this *circumcised state*, the third thing in the series, is the token of the covenant which subsisted between God and Abraham. For God says, Gen. xvii. 11th. verse "And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you," and verse 13th. "And *my covenant shall be in your flesh* for an everlasting covenant." But you say, "The covenant of circumcision is what God *required* Abraham to *agree to and to practice*." Then it is a law. But your fancy is no manner of consequence, my dear Sir, to your theory. Suppose the covenant of circumcision is this mere token, what then? You allow it to be a token of God's gracious *promises* to Abraham. But one of God's promises to Abraham was, "I will be a God to thee and thy

seed.” And the whole debate is respecting this, and the other *promises* made to this patriarch. So much for the covenant of circumcision.

In page 62, you say respecting Abraham’s household, “ But let it be more-or less, one thing is certain, they were all to be circumcised, on account of Abraham’s being a good man, full of faith.” That which is certain can easily be proved. Proof is not furnished. And it is believed never can be furnished. Yet you would make use of this assertion to clog the pædobaptist theory with the absurdity in practice, that if one of us should convert a South Carolina planter into a disciple, we of course make disciples of all his slaves, though they are 5000.

In page 68, is a remark which ought not to pass wholly unnoticed. It is this, “ You must indeed, persuade Christians to believe baptism to be of little worth, or they cannot rest contented with the manner of your handling that important Gospel ordinance.” This insinuates that I make light of the ordinance of baptism. This imputation, Sir, is as ungenerous, as it is ill founded. The opposite was told you ; and I now tell you, that I have exposed myself to great personal trials to guard the sacredness of this ordinance.

In page 74, to my argument from your supposed opinion that many dying in infancy are saved, you reply in this manner: "Perhaps your idea is this, that I believe some infants who have not been immersed may go to heaven, and be finally saved. This, Sir, I do believe, but what hath this to do with the present controversy?" It hath this to do with it, Sir. It entirely refutes your hypothesis. You have no warrant to believe that any human being is saved who is not to you a visible member of the kingdom of Christ. This is the force of the argument, which you have not noticed at all. Your notion of holding people to be good people, and heirs of glory, who have no visible place in the kingdom of God, is an outrage upon common sense, and a contradiction to the whole Bible. You exclude all infants without exception from this visible kingdom. The consequence is, that no warrant remains for you to consider any of them as saved. All the heirs of salvation are spoken of as being such visibly in this world. Isa. lxi. 9, "And their seed shall be *known* among the Gentiles and their *offspring* among the people, all that see them *shall acknowledge them* that they are *the seed* which the Lord hath blessed." Hundreds of other texts there are to the same purpose. Shew us if

you can where your warrant is, to believe in this manner without the visibility of union to Christ.

In imitation of your great English Baptist, Dr. Gill, who has given the world a pamphlet replete with that sort of envenomed raillery, and which some of his followers have had the imprudence to cause to be republished lately in Boston, you have attempted to fix opprobrium upon the doctrine of Pædobaptism, by deriving it from the foul cinqué of *popery*, and upon its abettors as enlisted under the banners of *Antichrist*. But you have condemned yourself with respect to the first, by conceding, that sprinkling was practised in the case of clinicks, before popery existed, and that infant baptism was in general practice in the days of St. Austin. If, Sir, you really think this sort of language is approved in heaven, why do not you extend it to other subjects, to prayer, and praise, fasting, the celebration of the Eucharist, alms giving, and common honesty?

These were all practised in the Romish church, and were among her decrees. If papistical practice vitiates the one, it vitiates the other. This language may gratify the malignity of a sectarian spirit. But it will be well to remember that forty children

did not revile Elisha with impunity. We will not return this opprobrious treatment. If we are not *baptized* as Christ was, we will remember his *example*, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself unto him who judgeth righteously." On the whole, the controversy, with respect to you and I, is brought to an *issue*. It is this. The foundation of your shadowy fabric was laid in *assertion*; the superstructure was reared in *assertion*; it has been attempted to be holden up by *assertion*; and it has, at last, vanished as a mere shadowy thing.

I am, &c.

LETTER V.

SIR,

I WILL now close my public correspondence with you by a slight attention to your last letter.

In this letter you pretend to adduce the sort of evidence which I demanded; i. e. Bible evidence. But here you entirely lose sight of the object you should have had in view, the support of your own theory and:

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practice ; and take the offensive part of bringing me under a pretended trial. You presume to erect a court, which you call the court of truth. . Thither you summon me as a criminal ; produce your indictment of " high crimes and misdemeanors ;" call your witnesses ; make them say what you please ; demand of me whether I plead guilty or not guilty ; say that I am, or that I am not, as suits you ; that you may best fasten an accumulation of guilt on me at last ; finally you pronounce me guilty, and declare the sentence. " Shame where is thy blush !" A greater burlesque upon theological discussion never appeared. A more wild and arrogant attempt to confound an antagonist never was witnessed. A political bully could not have gone farther. Is this assumption of infallibility, and thundering out your anathemas the way in which you expect to propagate your baptistical doctrines among reasonable men ? This, Sir, is not the court to which I appealed. For what signifies a string of texts, the most of which had been before marshalled out as proving your point, when it has been demonstrably shown, that your use of them does but take the thing for granted which is to be made out ?

This court which you have erected, and to which you have arrogantly summoned me, is not *the Bible*. This court is a *man*, a *sinful*

and *fallible man*, who has not given the most unequivocal evidence of the maturity of his judgment, the correctness of his knowledge, or the stability of his faith. This court is Daniel Merrill. Yes, Daniel Merrill has erected *himself* unasked, unappointed, and against numerous warnings of God's word, into a court of errors, and high crimes and misdemeanors, in relation to eternal concerns. Daniel Merrill is the judge, the accuser, the examiner, the witness, the jury, and, as far as he can be, the executor of the sentence. Reason and conscience, and fact too must bow to his omnipotent decision. And what are the crimes of which you accuse, and for which you condemn me? They are these.

1.. That I have not so much grace as you ; for you say, page 65,* " Unless God be pleased to give you a *large share of grace*, you will not so much desire the light of conviction, as the light by which to refute what I have written.

2. That I am *Antichrist*.—Introduction to the Reader.

3. For violating and *profaning* the first Gospel ordinance.—Page 87.

4. " For teaching the people to *misunderstand the laws* of Christ's kingdom."

5. " For doing what I could to bring into this kingdom those who have no Gospel liberty to come."

6. "For some public attempts *to increase* the blindness of many as to the subjects of Gospel baptism."

7. "For having impeached the honor of the Christian lawgiver."

Vain have been our hopes that the doctrine of infallibility was laughed out of countenance. No; it has a hundred lives. Surely your brethren must hang their heads when they see this dogmatizing; this dispatch at Robes- perian policy recalled into public view.

I most heartily forgive you all this abuse, and hope to meet you still in a better world; but, if I pursue this controversy any farther, it must be with a disputant from whom a little more modesty is to be expected.

Yours, &c.

SAMUEL AUSTIN.

WORCESTER, April 26, 1805.

CONCLUSION.

THE writer of the foregoing Letters has now closed his public correspondence with Mr. Merrill. He has consulted brevity, having no wish to obtrude on the public prolix

discussions of a subject which has been largely canvassed by learned and ingenious men. He refers to the subject of the *mode* of baptism. This is the point of the most labor, and the greatest confidence in Mr. Merrill's publications. Should any other writer appear to advocate the doctrine, that immersion is the exclusive mode of baptism, and essential to it, he will not be entitled to a public reply, unless he shall make use of some new topic of argument, or give old arguments a much more plausible form than they have yet assumed. And he must be holden to the scripture as his source of evidence, because there can be no *essential* doctrine, institution or duty, which the scripture itself does not clearly ascertain.

The subject of free communion is one in which the author of these letters feels especially interested ; free communion, he means, among all who give evidence that they love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth. If a man is evidently governed by the carnal heart which is enmity against God ; if he prove this by opposing the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, or neglecting its self-denying, unquestionable duties, he is not a visible saint. For free communion with persons of this description, the writer does not

contend. He is altogether against it. But for such communion with all who are acknowledged to be "the seed which the Lord hath blessed," he is an advocate. A visibility of this, of a person's being of this seed, is the only principle of separation between the church and the world. The question is, are we visibly for Christ, or against him? Do we gather with him or scatter abroad? If we are constrained to decide in the affirmative, the direction of Christ applies, "Forbid him not." We may be of the former character, and yet err in some of our opinions, and be faulty in some of our practice. But no errors, either in sentiment or practice, short of what must exclude us from a visible standing in the covenant, can warrant any one to deny us christian fellowship. To do it is certainly to withhold the blessings of grace from those to whom the covenant has bequeathed them. It is to oppose the harmony of brethren, and to put asunder what God has joined. It is to give occasion to the enemies of religion to blaspheme, and to offend those whom Christ has redeemed.

There are antipædobaptists, who seem to be governed by a mere sectarian spirit; and who are so tenacious of the doctrine and practice of close communion, that they have not eyes to see evidence, though it be demonstra-

tive. To such persons we preach and write in vain. Others, governed by the uniting spirit of Christianity, are free communionists in principle. *They* are our brethren. We meet *them* at the throne, and in the ordinances of our common Savior with perfect cordiality. Others there are who practice close communion with much hesitation, and rather through the influence of those with whom they are immediately connected, than from any settled conviction in their own minds of the justness of it. Such persons are susceptible of instruction. They will attend to evidence. Their establishment in the truth on this article is a matter of hope. The subject has not, it is apprehended been fully investigated. A farther investigation of it would promise material advantage to the interests of religion. And as the writer of these pages has ventured into the field, he holds himself prepared to defend the doctrine of free communion, according to the principle just stated, and to disprove the right of the opposite. But should the discussion of this subject be farther pursued, it must be done fairly, without personal variance, and with a strict attention to proof as the sole object of enquiry.

The Rev. SAMUEL WORCESTER, of Salem, has sent forward the following Remarks, in reply to what Mr. MERRILL has thought proper to address to him, at the close of his Letters to the Author; with a request that they might have a place in this publication, as the most convenient way of laying them before the public.

1. MR. WORCESTER is ready to prove by substantial witnesses, that Mr. Merrill has said, *he was thankful, or desired to be thankful, that he knew the Greek as well as any man.* It was understood that he was *thankful, or desired to be thankful to God.* To whom else should he be thankful?

It will not be denied, that some of the most learned men as well of former ages as of the present age, are to be numbered among "the opposers" of the antipædobaptists. Mr. Merrill acknowledges "that he may have said something to *this purport*, that he understood the Greek words which relate to the ordinance of baptism, as well as do the opposers." To know these words as well, he must be as well read in Greek authors, and have as good a knowledge of the Greek language. Is he then, offended because Mr. Worcester "has charged, *most ungenerously charged,*" to his account, that *he is thankful, or "desires to*

thank God," that he knows the Greek so well?

After all it is to be remembered, that Mr. W. did not assert, that Mr. M. *had said* "he desired to thank God that he knew the Greek as well as any man;" though he now asserts, and is ready to prove, that Mr. M. *has "uttered"* something to this effect. It is hardly to be supposed that the pharisee, who went up to the temple, with the publican, to pray, used the identical words "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men," &c. but this was the *spirit* of his prayer. And the judicious and candid, who "know the man and his communications," will judge, whether this be not the *spirit* of Mr. Merrill's books and conversation. "*I desire to thank God that I know, not only the Greek, but every thing else, pertaining to the subject of baptism, as well as any man!*"

2. Mr. Merrill says, "his sentiment of John's being called the Baptist is, that he was thus called because he was baptized, and that every baptist minister is called a baptist for the same identical reason for which John was thus called, and that the brethren among the baptists are thus called, not because they are *baptizers*, but because they are *baptized*." So, then, Paul was called an apostle because he was sent to *preach* the gospel; every minister of Christ may be called an apostle for the same identical reason, for which Paul

was thus called; and the brethren of our churches, and the people of our congregations, may be called apostles, not because they are *preachers* but because they are *preached to*!! The cases are similar.

The apostles *baptized*; but we nowhere read of Paul, or Peter, the Baptist. The first christians *were baptized*; but they were not called baptists. The ministers of Christ, generally, from the apostles' days to the present, have *baptized*, and the professors of christianity, generally, have *been baptized*; but neither the ministers, nor professors, have been, generally, called baptists.

John had a *special* commission; and was called the Baptist for a *special* reason. And Mr. Wocester really thought, that Mr. Merrill had the candor, or the conscience, to acknowledge, that "the term baptist was not applied to John in the same sense, in which it is now applied to those, who are called baptists;" that is, *to distinguish a particular sect*. But, if he misunderstood Mr. M. he is perfectly willing to leave Mr. M. at liberty to choose, whether to acknowledge, or to deny it.

Mr. W. is not emulous of the honor of being thought a disciple of John the Baptist, as Mr. M. and his brethren appear to be. He will be happy, if he can only be a disciple of

Jesus Christ. He rejoices "*that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John;*" and he thinks it might be well for Mr. M. and his brethren to remember the words of John respecting Jesus and himself, "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*"

3. After all Mr. Merrill's bluster, and parade of denial, he is constrained to acknowledge, that he did make the "concessions" which Mr. Worcester asserts, "on the supposition that this proposition of Mr. W. was correct"—*that the Tabernacle church held to the same great and leading maxim with the Waldenses, &c.*" "This proposition is certainly understood to be "correct;" nor did Mr. M. in the conversation alluded to, deny, or pretend to disbelieve it. Whether the "*practice* of the Tabernacle church correspond with this maxim, and that thoroughly," is entirely out of the question. It has not been shewn, that the practice of the Waldenses corresponded, and that thoroughly, with their creed. It is, indeed, pretty certain that they did not practice, according to Mr. Merrill's views of their "great and leading maxim."

Mr. Merrill is now at liberty to make his election, whether to *acknowledge*, what Mr. Worcester has said, and still believes, he did

acknowledge; or, in the face of day, to *deny* what every person, capable of the lowest act of reasoning, must see to be true.

Mr. Worcester has but little concern about the "damage" which he is likely to "sustain," from Mr. M. "publicly contradicting his public statements." But he sincerely laments, that any "*public teacher of religion*" should be left to exhibit himself in a manner so reproachful to his profession, and so wounding to the cause of christianity, as that in which Mr. Merrill has seen fit to exhibit himself, of late, before the public.

THE
MODE AND SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM
EXAMINED,

IN
SEVEN SERMONS.

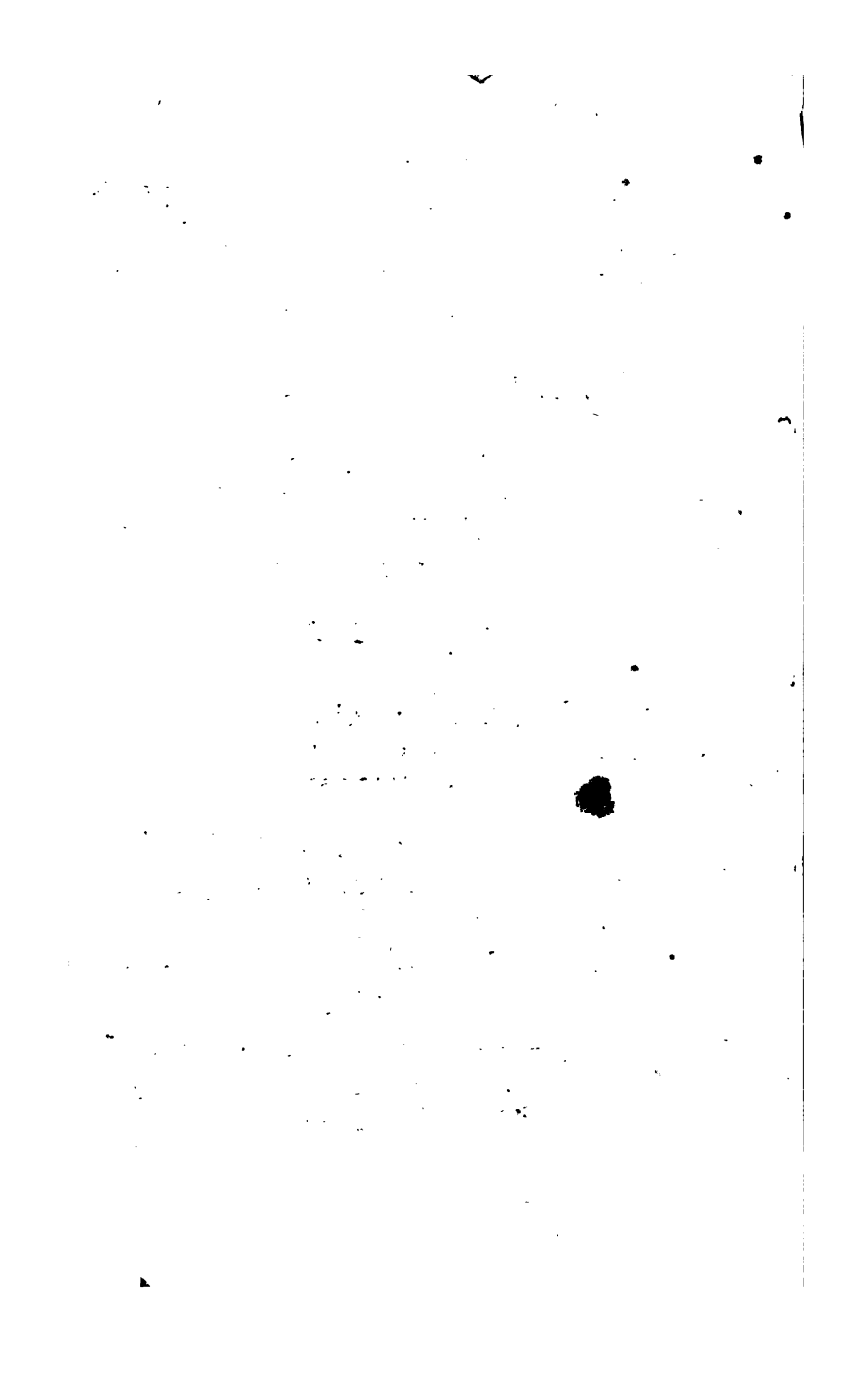
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OF THE
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PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN SEDGWICK.

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he doeth? NICODEMUS. John vii. 51.*
*Whofoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he
cannot be my disciple. JESUS CHRIST.*

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TO THE READER.

FELLOW TRAVELLER TO ETERNITY,

YOU and I are the offspring of God. The period of our return to him swiftly approaches. Then the motive I have had in writing, and which you shall have had in reading, will both be known. How, and how far, the following pages will affect my present and future life, is with the LORD. How far they shall affect thine, is also with HIM. One thing is certain: the truth of what I have written will be soon known. You are willing to know it now, provided you know the value of the gospel, and possess an heart humbled by its doctrines.

Reader, be not offended at what I have written, till you be sure it is false. Do thyself no harm. Read, consider, compare every part, and the whole with divine truth, in such a manner and spirit, as shall yield thee a pleasing reflection in the world to come.

If

[iv.]

If the subject, as here presented, be true, it is a serious truth. If an error, it is a serious one. It nearly concerns the kingdom of EMANUEL, to whose pleasure and mercy the whole is cheerfully resigned,

By,

Reader,

Thy Servant,

For Jesus' Sake,

THE AUTHOR.

Sedgwick, Dec. 27, 1804.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS.

OF

BAPTISM.

SERMON I.

MATTHEW XVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

IT hath pleased the Father of Mercies to bestow on fallen man a revelation from heaven. In it is contained the scheme of grace, which brings life and immortality to light. It shows the way by which to escape the wrath to come, and to find the favour of God. All scripture is given by his inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Till the human heart be humbled, in measure, man feels not his need of divine teaching; nor will he make the scriptures the man of his counsel. But, my brethren, and people, it is doubtless the case, that many of

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you

you possess a willingness to have your principles and practice squared by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ. My text contains some of the last words of our great High Priest. It is the general orders which he gave his first apostles, and left for the instruction, practice and comfort of all their successors, to the end of the world. In the verse which precedes my text, Christ informs us, that all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him. His words, therefore, are clothed with authority. May we hear, and fear, and be obedient. Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto the King of Zion, What dost thou?

So far as we be Christians, all that is necessary to enforce obedience is, to know what Christ would have us to do. Perhaps not a passage in all the oracles of truth contains more extensive instruction than do the words of my text. The commands are exceedingly broad; the Baptismal Institution comprehends all obedient disciples; and the comforting promise is durable as the world.

In my text, Christ Jesus, the head of the church and Lord of all, constituted his present and succeeding disciples to be apostles unto all nations. It contains their commission, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed——

I. To go and disciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

III. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment.

Lastly.

Lastly. For their encouragement and comfort, he adds, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I suppose it will be expedient, and with me it is an indispensable duty, that I lay each of these propositions as fairly and as fully before you as I can. But I shall not observe the order in which they lie in my text, which is as I have just stated them. For I have many things to say unto you, in agreement with my text, but fear that you are not, all of you, able to bear them now. We shall therefore begin with the

II. Which contains Christ's command to baptize, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who shall be disciples of all nations.

Nor do I purpose to call your attention, at this time, to the whole which is implied in this proposition. But what I purpose is, to define a few words which appertain to the ordinance, and then collect the scripture account of baptism, with some other texts, which may throw light upon the subject. Afterwards, in discourses which may follow, I may produce evidence, that my definition of baptism is accurate and just; and show how the apostles and primitive Christians understood this matter, and how they practised. When this is done, it will be easily seen, what is the outward and visible part of baptism; and then the purport, end and design of the institution may call for some attention.

Before I proceed to open, illustrate and confirm these particulars, I have several things to say unto you. For I wish you to attend to the subject without partiality and without hypocrisy. I pray God to remove darkness and all prejudice from your minds, that you may, indeed, come to the law and to the testimony of Jesus Christ in this matter.

You.

You will consider me as under the strongest worldly inducements to continue to believe and practise as I have heretofore done ; for should I, after mature consideration, be constrained to believe and practise differently, you will be released from all legal obligations to afford me any farther support ; my relations will, the most of them, probably be greatly shocked, and displeased, at the report : many, whom I highly value as Christians, and numbers of them zealous preachers of the gospel, will, it may be, consider me as lost, and worse than lost, to the church and world : and, besides this, multitudes will, no doubt, say all manner of evil against me. All this being true, with a thousand other connected, smaller evils, and nothing of a worldly nature in prospect, save what is contained in the promise of Jesus Christ, you cannot but conclude that I shall proceed no farther in this matter than I am obliged to, in following the Lamb of God whithersoever he goeth.

Having said thus much with respect to myself, I will still add, that, should a change in my belief and practice, respecting the subject on hand, bring me to a more full belief and practice of the truth, I shall, on the whole, be a gainer. But, should a change take place, and I be called to sustain all the evils which I may calculate upon, and after all be plunged myself into a hurtful and bewildering error, surely all the meek and lowly in heart would rather commiserate than revile me.

Another thing I would mention to you, so that the subject may, if it possibly can, meet your minds without prejudice. You ought not to fix your judgments, nor found your belief, upon the arguments, or confessions, of great and good men, any farther than such arguments and

and confessions are conformed with the scriptures of truth. Should we hearken to what the greatest and best of men have confessed and affirmed of the subject which we are about to consider, and have our belief and practice corresponding with what they have written, the matter would, most evidently, go against what we have, in time past, both believed and practised. For they have very generally, or very many of them, if not all of them; confessed, or affirmed, however their practice may have been, that immersion was the mode practised by the apostles and primitive church. This I purpose to prove to you in its proper place.

What I have more to add, before I proceed to the main business, is, to state a few plain truths.

1. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a Christian ordinance; but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit, have taught us.

2. All which we are required to believe and practise; with respect to the Christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ and his forerunner and apostles.

3. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he, no doubt, delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject; that his immediate disciples and apostles understood and practised as he would have them.

4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is distinct from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.

5. No man, or body of men, have any more authority to add to this ordinance, or to diminish from it, than they have to institute a new one and call it Christ's.

6. Whenever

10 THE MODE AND SUBJECTS [Serm.I.]

6. Whenever, and wherever, this ordinance is so changed, as to lose the intent of the Institutor, then and there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

Having laid these preparatory observations, remarks and plain truths before you, we proceed to consider the subject now on hand, which is—

Christ's command to baptize, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who shall be disciples of all nations.

What is proposed for the present discourse is—

1. To define a few words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. Then—

2. To collect the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which may throw light upon the subject. Afterwards, in some following discourses, we may—

3. Produce evidence, that my definition of baptism is accurate and just. Then show—

4. How the apostles and primitive church understood this matter, and how they practised. When this is done, it will be easily seen—

5. What is the outward and visible part of Christian baptism. Then—

Lastly, The purport, end and design of the baptismal institution may call for our attention.

Agreeably to what is proposed, we are—

1. To define a few words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. These are—

1. *Baptisterion*, Greek; *baptisterium* and *lavarium*, Latin; a font, a bath, a washing place, a vessel to wash the body in; English.

2. *Baptisma* and *baptizma*, Greek; *Baptisma* and *Lotio*, also

also, *ablutia faura*, Latin; baptism, washing, sacred, ceremonial washing; English.

3. *Baptizis*, Greek; *baptista*, Latin; one who dips, a baptist; English.

4. *Baptizō*, Greek; *baptizo, mergo, lavo*, Latin; to baptize, to dip all over, to wash; English.

5. *Lauō*, Greek; *lavo*, Latin; to wash, to rinse, to bathe; English.

2. We are to collect the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts which may throw light upon the subject.

We will begin with those passages which speak of the baptism of John.

1. *Matth. iii. 5, 6, 7.* Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, &c.

2. Verse 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, &c.

3. Verses 13, 14, 15, 16. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him: but John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? and Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness: then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.

4. *Matth. xxi. 25, 26, 27.* The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we should say from heaven, he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

him? But, if we shall say of men, we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell, &c.

5. *Mark i. 4, 5.* John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him, in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6. Verses 8, 9, 10. I indeed have baptized you with water—And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water, &c.

7. *Mark xi. 30.* The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

8. *Luke iii. 3.* And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

9. Verses 7, 8. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers—bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.

10. Verse 12. Then came also publicans to be baptized.

11. Verse 16. I indeed baptize you with water.

12. Verse 21. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also, being baptized, &c.

13. *Luke vii. 29, 30.* And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

14. *Luke*

14. *Luke* xx. 4. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

15. *John* i. 25, 26. Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water.

16. Verse 28. Beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

17. Verse 31. That he should be made manifest to Israel; therefore am I come baptizing with water.

18. Verse 33. He that sent me to baptize with water.

19. *John* iii. 23. And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Sakim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized.

20. *John* iv. 1. The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John.

21. *John* x. 40. Beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized.

22. *Acts* i. 5. John truly baptized with water.

23. Verse 21. Beginning from the baptism of John.

24. *Acts* x. 37. After the baptism which John preached.

25. *Acts* xi. 16. John indeed baptized with water.

26. *Acts* xiii. 24. When John had first preached, before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people.

27. *Acts* xviii. 25. He (Apollon) spake and taught, diligently, the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

28. *Acts* xix. 3, 4. Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of re-

penitance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

We will next turn our attention to those texts which mention Christ's baptism.

1. *Matth. xxviii. 19.* Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

2. *Mark xvi. 15, 16.* And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved,

3. *John iii. 5.* Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, &c.

4. *Versé 22.* After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there tarried with them and baptized,

5. *Versé 26.* Behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

6. *John iv. 1, 2.* When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)

7. *Acts iii. 38.* Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

8. *Acts ii. 41.* Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.

9. *Acts viii. 12, 13.* But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both
men

men and women. Then Simon himself believed also, and when he was baptized, &c.

10. *Acts* viii. 16. Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

11. *Verſes* 36, 37, 38, 39. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch ſaid, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip ſaid, If thou beſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt. And he ſaid, I believe that Jeſus-Chriſt is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to ſtand ſtill. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, &c.

12. *Acts* ix. 18. And he (Saul) aroſe, and was baptized.

13. *Acts* x. 47, 48. Can any man forbid water, that theſe ſhould not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghoſt as well as we? and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

14. *Acts* xvi. 15. And when ſhe (Lydia) was baptized, and her houſehold.

15. *Verſe* 33. And was baptized, he (the jailor) and all his, ſtraightway.

16. *Acts* xviii. 8. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

17. *Acts* xix. 5. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus.

18. *Acts* xxii. 19. And now, why tarrieſt thou? ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins, calling on the name of the Lord.

19. *Rom.* vi. 3, 4. Know ye not, that ſo many of us as were baptized into Chriſt Jeſus, were baptized in-
to

to his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

20. *1 Cor. i. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.* Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: Besides, I know not whether I baptized any other; for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

21. *1 Cor. vi. 11.* But ye are washed.

22. *1 Cor. 12, 13.* For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.*

23. *1 Cor. xv. 29.* Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead?

24. *Gal. iii. 27.* For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

25. *Eph. iv. 5.* One baptism.

26. *Eph. v. 26.* That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

27. *Col. ii. 12.* Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.

28. *Titus iii. 5.* According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

29. *Heb. vi. 2.* The doctrine of baptisms.†

30. *Heb. x. 22.* Our bodies washed with pure water.

31. *1 Peter,*

* *This intends, as some suppose, the baptism of the Holy Ghost.*

† *It is not certain that this hath any reference to Christian baptism. If it have, it must refer not to that only. See DODDRIDGE in loc.*

31. 1 *Peter*, iii. 21. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.)

These, I believe, are all the texts in the New Testament which have a plain and obvious reference to either the baptism of John, or of Christ. They afford us the sum of all the knowledge which we can have of either the mode or subjects of Christian baptism. What these passages say, we may believe : what they do not countenance, we may not believe. I will now set before you those passages where washing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are used.

1. *Matth.* vi. 17. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and (*nipsai*) wash thy face.

2. *Matth.* xv. 2. Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders ? for they (*niptontai*) wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3. *Matth.* xxvii. 24. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and (*epanipsato*) washed his hands.

4. *Mark* vii. 2. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say with (*anip-tois*) unwashen hands.

5. Verse 3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they (*nipsōntai*) wash their hands oft, they eat not, &c.

6. Verse 4. When they come from the market, except they (*baptizōntai*) wash, they eat not ; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the (*baptismous*) washings of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.

7. Verse 5. But eat bread with (*aniptoīs*) unwashen hands.

8. Verse 8. For, laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the (*baptismous*) washing of pots and cups.

9. Luke v. 2. And they (*epiplunan*) were washing their nets.

10. Luke vii. 38. And stood at his feet, behind him, weeping, and began (*brechein*) to wash his feet.

11. Verse 44. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she (*ebrexe*) hath washed my feet with tears.

12. Luke xi. 38. And when the Pharisees saw it, that he had not first (*ebaptisbē*) washed before dinner.

13. John ix. 7. And said unto him, Go, and (*nipsai*) wash in the pool of Siloam;—he went his way therefore and (*nipsato*) washed.

14. Verse 15. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight: he said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I (*enipsamēn*) washed and do see.

15. John xiii. 5. After that he poured water into a basin, and began (*niptein*) to wash the disciples' feet.

16. Verse 6. And Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou (*nipseis*) wash my feet?

17. Verse 8. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never (*nipses*) wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I (*nipso*) wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

18. Verse 10. Jesus saith to him, He that is (*kleomenos*) washed, needeth not save (*nipsasbhai*) to wash his feet, &c.

19. Verse 14. If I then, your Lord and master (*enipsa*) have washed your feet, ye also ought (*niptein*) to wash one another's feet.

20. *Acts ix. 37.* And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick and died, whom when they had (*loufantis*) washed.

21. *Acts xvi. 33.* And he took them, the same hour of the night, and (*elousen*) washed their stripes.

22. *Acts xxii. 16.* And now, why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and (*apolousai*) wash away thy sins.

23. *1 Cor. vi. 11.* But such were some of you, but ye (*apelousasthē*) are washed.

24. *Eph. v. 26.* That he might sanctify and cleanse it with (*loutrō*) the washing of water by the word:

25. *1 Tim. v. 10.* If she (*enipsen*) have washed the saints' feet.

26. *Titus iii. 5.* By the (*loutrou*) washing of regeneration.

27. *Heb. ix. 10.* Which stood only in meats and drinks, and (*diaphorais baptismois*) divers washings.

28. *Heb. x. 22.* Having our bodies (*louloumenoi*) washed with pure water.

29. *2 Peter, ii. 22.* But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb—and the sow that (*loufamenē*) was washed, &c.

30. *Rev. i. 5.* Unto him that loved us and (*loufanti*) washed us from our sins in his own blood.

31. *Rev. vii. 14.* These are they who came out of great tribulation, and (*eplunon*) have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.*

Those passages which make mention of SPRINKLING, with the Greek words used, now call for your attention.

1 *Heb.*

* *Plunō properly signifies to wash clothes ; as louō, the body ; and niptō, the face and hands.*

1. *Heb. ix. 13.* For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer (*rhantizousa*) sprinkling the-un-clean, &c.

2. *Verse 19.* He (Moses) took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool and hyssop, and (*errhantise*) sprinkled both the book and all the people.

3. *Heb. x. 22.* Having our hearts (*errhantismeroi*) sprinkled from an evil conscience.

4. *Heb. xi. 28.* Through faith he kept the passover and the (*proschusin*) sprinkling of blood.

5. *Heb. xii. 24.* And to the blood of (*rhantismou*) sprinkling.

6. *1 Peter i. 2.* And to the (*rhantismou*) sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Lastly. You will now give attention, for a moment, to those passages of scripture where the word *διπ* is mentioned.

1. *Luke xvi. 24.* That he may (*bapsē*) dip his finger in water.

2. *Matth. xxvi. 23.* And he answered and said, He that (*embapsas*) dippeth his hand with me in the dish.

3. *Mark xiv. 20.* And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that (*embaptomenos*) dippeth with me in the dish.

4. *John xiii. 26.* And he answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have (*bapsas*) dipped it; and when he had (*embapsas*) dipped the sop, &c.

5. *Rev. xix. 13.* And he was clothed with a vesture (*emhammenon*) dipped in blood.

A few remarks on what we have passed over will close the present discourse.

1. We see that all the words, which appertain to the ordinance

ordinance of baptism, signify the same which they would provided immersion were the scripture mode.

2. We see that the subject of baptism is very repeatedly mentioned in the New Testament. It is brought to view expressly in about threescore passages.

3. Whenever baptism is mentioned, and neither the word *baptizō*, nor *baptismos*, is used, the word substituted plainly intimates that bathing, or washing the body all over, is the mode; for this is the signification of *louō*, which is the word, and the only word, which the scriptures employ in the room of *baptizō*.

4. Whenever *baptizō*, or *baptismos*, is translated washing, a ceremonial and not a common washing is manifestly intended.

5. We find that in all the places where sprinkling is mentioned, the original words, *rhantizō* and *proschuſin*, are very different from *baptizō* and *baptismos*.

6. You will please to observe, that wherever we find, through the New Testament, the word, to dip, it is from the same theme whence *baptizō* comes.

7. We see that every thing looks as though immersion might be the mode; and, as for sprinkling, there is, to say the least, nothing which looks like it.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

BAPTISM.

SERMON II.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

THE business which we are now upon depends very much upon the definitions of certain words, and principally upon the definition of the word *baptize*, and upon the certain evidence of such definition, or definitions, being accurate and just. For we can no otherwise understand what God the Lord saith unto us, than by knowing the import of the words by which he is pleased to communicate his will. The Great Teacher, who came from God, hath doubtless communicated his mind so explicitly that the humble in heart may know the common matters which relate to faith and practice. If we devoutly search the scriptures, and seek wisdom as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures, God will make us to understand knowledge, and to serve him with

with acceptable practice. The Spirit of the Lord hath, most certainly, chosen acceptable words, words of definite meaning. We are to search out their signification, and to be obedient. I cannot judge of their signification for you, nor can I answer for the judgment which you shall make up, nor can you for me.

I am, by my office, obliged to exhibit, so far as I can, all those divine truths which relate to faith and practice. I am obliged to believe and practise according to the best light which I can gather, or have in any way afforded me. You are under similar obligations.

Whilst we proceed, I wish you to believe, fully, two things ; one is, that truth, if believed and practised, will not, on the whole, harm you. The other is, that the most sure way to acquire truth is, to be of a humble and obedient mind, ready to receive the truth. For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

In the preceding discourse, we attended to the definition of certain words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism ; and then collected the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which are supposed to throw light upon the subject under consideration. In this discourse we are—

3. To produce the more direct evidence, that my definitions of baptism, and to baptize, are accurate and just.

The definition, which I gave of baptism, was, a *washing*, a *sacred*, a *ceremonial* washing. I will now add to this definition, that it is immersion, or dipping one all over in water.

The definition which I gave of the word *baptizō* is, to dip all over, to wash. I will also add, that the word signifies, to wash the body, or any thing, all over. What I mean

is,

is, that these are the signification of the words *baptisma* and *baptizō*, which are rendered baptism and to baptize.

I am now to produce evidence, that this is a just and accurate definition of the words.

You will observe, that this is quite different from the *subjects* of baptism; that is another subject, which must be attended to in its place.

The evidence which I have to offer, in order to fix precisely the just sense and meaning of the words *baptism* and to *baptize*, is contained in the following facts. The

1st Comprises what the Greek Lexicon, Concordance, and two English Dictionaries, testify of the words.

Schrevelius's Lexicon testifies, the import of *baptism* is *lotio*, washing. Also that to *baptize* signifies to *wash*, to put under water, or under any other liquid thing; to sink, dip in, duck or plunge over head, to immerse.

Butterworth's Concordance says, baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, whereby a professed believer in Christ, is in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, immersed in and covered with water, and then raised up out of it, as a sign of his fellowship with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection, and a sign of his own death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life here, and to life eternal hereafter. The same concordance defines the word to baptize, thus—to dip, immerse, or plunge.

Entick's dictionary says, that—*Baptism* is a sacrament that admits into the church.—*Baptizer*, one who christens, or dips.—*Baptistry*, the place of baptizing at, a font.—*Baptize*, to christen, plunge, overwhelm.—*Baptized*, admitted to baptism, dipt, &c.

Bailey's dictionary, speaking of baptism, or rather the place in which persons were baptized, says, *Baptistry* is either

either the place, or vessel, in which persons are baptized. In ancient times, this being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river and were plunged; but in the time of Constantine the Great, chapels, or places on purpose to baptize in, were built in great cities, which was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dipping the persons; but in process of time, in the western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in place of dipping; which was the origin of our fountains in churches.

2. I will repeat some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism, that you may look at them, and judge for yourselves, whether the preceding definitions appear just.

John baptized in the river Jordan.

He was baptizing in Enon because there was much water there.

The name of the place, where baptism was administered, is *baptisterion*, or *baptistery*, which signifies a place in which to wash the body all over.

Baptism signifies to dip, plunge, immerse, or wash the body all over in water.

Baptizer signifies one who dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water.

To baptize signifies to plunge under water, to dip, or to wash the body all over.

To be baptized is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

Does this whole matter, taking so many of the words, and some circumstances, and finding them all so well agreeing together, help you, in any degree, to the definition of the word *baptize*? Supposing these things be facts, and you had never had any prejudice for, or against, the

word baptize, would you be able to gather the meaning of it from what hath been said?

There is an objection starting in the minds of some of you, which should be now obviated, lest it prejudice your minds from the truth.

The objection is, Do not the words signify some other things, as well as those which have been mentioned?

Ans. I have thought they did: but I have searched in several dictionaries, and read many authors upon the words, yet have not found one dictionary which has given a definition of the words different from what I have given; nor one author who has been able to show, that the true meaning of the words is any otherwise than what I have mentioned. Besides, the very course of argumentation which Dr. LATHROP, Mr. CLEVELAND and others have taken, by which to prove that *baptizō* hath some other signification than to dip, immerse, to bury or overwhelm, is an implicit confession that they were not able to prove any such thing. It is also a strong presumptive argument, that no different signification can be found.

Their argument is this: *Baptō* signifies, in one instance, in the Old Testament, to wet with the dew of heaven. *Baptizō* is the offspring of *baptō*, and consequently may be taken in the same sense. This argument is of the same weight with the following; My father believes in sprinkling, as being baptism; I am his offspring, and consequently I believe the same; when the fact is, I am largely convinced that it is no such thing. Would gentlemen employ such an argument, did not their cause labour? Such an argument, when it stands, as it does, at the front of all their supposed evidence, is an implicit confession

confession that they cannot prove what they wish to.*

This matter will have farther attention in another place.

3. The words *baptismus* and *baptizō* have two, and only two, translations, in the New Testament. These two are, *baptism* and *washing*. They are very generally rendered *baptism*, or *to baptize*. This is their usual translation. But several times in *Mark*, *Luke*, and in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, they are rendered washing. As the washing

* Since writing the above, I have met with Cole's Latin Dictionary, which gives one English of baptizo, to sprinkle. It hath, indeed, been matter of no little surprise, that all modern dictionary compilers have not given one definition of the word baptize, to sprinkle; for it, indeed, is one signification, which the practice of many Christians, for two or three hundred years past, has given to the word.

Had all lexicons, and all dictionaries, for the two last centuries, borne united testimony, that one sense of the word baptizō was to sprinkle, it would not have been half so unaccountable as it now is that they have so generally retained the ancient and primitive significations, and refused to adopt the modern one, which prejudice, convenience and modern practice have given to it. Indeed, could a thousand modern lexicons and dictionaries be found, which should say, to sprinkle is one sense in which baptizō is used, it would all come to nothing, unless they should testify that this is one of its ancient and primitive significations: and even then, it would come to no more than this, that the word is less determinate, than it is now supposed to be. Could they do this, it would be still nothing, unless they prove the scriptures use it in this sense, which they cannot do. But if they could, it would not be fully to their point, unless they can show, that it is thus used in application to the ordinance.

ing of pots, and cups and brazen vessels and tables, or seats on which they reclined, when they ate meat ; and *diaphorais baptismois* in Hebrew is rendered, *divers washings*.

In the law given by Moses, the people were, on many occasions, to bathe their bodies, and wash their clothes in water ; and also to put their pots and cups and brazen vessels into water, that they might be cleansed from ceremonial uncleannels. To these legal ceremonies the Pharisees had added traditional ones, which were, no doubt, observed in the same manner as those appointed by the Lord. If so, then the washing of pots, &c. in *Mark*, was putting them into water, as the command was to do, *Levit. xi. 32*. The divers washings in *Heb. ix. 10*, were ceremonial washings, or bathings, in which the body was washed, or dipped. *Numb. xix. 19*. This being the case, does not this matter go to confirm, or determine, what is the definition of baptism ?

4. We will now mention a few noted witnesses, who have given their testimony as to the meaning of the word *baptizō*.

Calvin, a very warm opposer of the Baptists, shall, as a witness in this cause, speak first. His testimony is, "Howbeit, the very word of baptizing signifieth to dip."

Zanchius, as brought forward by the Rev. Mr. Butterworth, shall be my next witness. He says, *baptizō* is to immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm in water.

I could quote, or bring forward, a multitude of witnesses, and all from our own order, the Pædobaptists, to prove the same point. But in the mouth of two or three witnesses, if they be good ones, every word shall be established. We will therefore produce but one more ; that shall

shall be good Dr. Owen. "For the original and natural signification of it (*baptizō*) it signifies to dip, to plunge."*

5. I will mention to you a Greek word, which Paul repeatedly uses, as signifying the same thing as *baptizō*, and where he means the same thing, namely, baptism.

In 1. Cor. vi. 11, Paul, speaking to the Corinthians of divers kinds of vile sinners, says, "And such were some of you; but ye are *washed*," &c.

Eph. v. 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the *washing* of water, by the word.

Heb. x. 22. Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our *bodies washed* with pure water.

The Pædobaptists acknowledge that *washing*, in these texts, means *baptism*, and I know not that any of them deny it. Baptism and washing appear to be used as synonymous words, or as words signifying the same thing. If this be the case, then the two words, *baptizō* and *louō*, which are translated, one to baptize, and the other to wash, mean the same thing, and are thus intended by the Apostle. Then, provided we can determine what *louō* means, we can also determine what is the signification of *baptizō*. This word, *louō*, signifies to wash, and to bathe the body in water, for thus it is generally, if not universally, used; and from it is *loutron*, a bath, or place to wash the body in. Besides, the word *louō* is never used in the New Testament, nor any where else, to my knowledge, to signify either sprinkling or common washing. Its appropriate

propriate sense appears to be, bathing, or washing, any thing all over; as you may see, *Acts* ix. 37, and xvi. 33; *2 Peter* ii. 22; which are the only places where I recollect the word *louō* is used, save where the ordinance of baptism appears to be referred to. This being the case, the matter appears just as it would, provided the ordinance included the bathing of the body in water. This is letting scripture interpret itself: and the interpretation which it gives is, baptism is bathing, or washing the body in water. This, therefore, may help you a little towards determining in your minds what is the signification of *baptizō*. For *louō* is repeatedly used in scripture, as importing the same mode of washing which is commanded in the ordinance of baptism.

6. Paul's description of the mode of baptizing, or of what is done to those who are baptized, may afford you farther light upon the subject.

Paul brings this matter up to the Roman and Colossian Christians, as a matter well known to them. To the former he says, *Rom.* vi. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. To the other he says, *Col.* ii. 12, Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Upon these texts, Dr. Doddridge has the following note. "It seems the part of candour to confess, that here is an allusion to baptism by immersion, as most usual in these early times." Here the good doctor says, "as was most usual:" this I shall, by and by, explain to you.

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In the mean time, you will please to pay due attention to what was done to those who were baptized, and which appears to be familiar to the Roman and Colossian Christians. The Apostle makes no remarks, and explains nothing to them, but speaks to them as though they would and did well understand what he meant, when he said, "We are buried with him by baptism into death;" and, "Buried with him in baptism." It is plain fact, that Paul thus speaks, and it also appears, very plainly, that he had no apprehension but that he should be understood.

Bishop Hoadly's declaration appears to be much in point: 'If baptism,' says he, 'had been *then*, i. e. in the apostles' days, 'performed as it is now among us, we should never have so much as heard of this form of expression, of dying and rising again in this rite.'*

These things I have thought it my duty to lay before you, that I might assist you, by a number of plain facts, to form a judgment, each one for himself, what the meaning of baptism is, and what the word to *baptize* signifies.

I have still more light upon this subject, and shall, in the next discourse, lay it within your view. It will perhaps be, to some of you, more convincing than any thing which I have as yet exhibited. But previously I will make one observation, and it is this: all the evidence which we have been exhibiting, we have on one side of the question; and, if I mistake not, none on the other to counteract it: for, if my memory and judgment be correct, the wisest and best of men, of our own denomination, have asserted, that these things are so. I do

do not say that all good men have ; but the most learned have, and some who have appeared very pious.

But you will say, Why have they not practised differently, if they have thus believed ? I am not answerable for their practice ; but, if the Lord will, I shall, ere long, give you the reasons which they assign.

I shall only add, for the present, two or three consequences, and then leave the subject for your consideration.

1. The Baptists have, against our practice, and for theirs, that kind of evidence which is, perhaps, in all cases but the present, considered the most unequivocal and certain. This evidence is given in by a cloud of witnesses, who, whilst they are bearing their testimony, condemn themselves every sentence they utter. If these men, who are confessed by both sides to be both pious and learned, may be believed, the cause will most certainly be determined against us ; for there was never a clearer case. They unitedly testify that the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, but omit the practice. In this they condemn themselves.

2. The scripture sense, and, for aught appears, the only sense, of baptism, is, dipping, immersion, burying in water, being overwhelmed, and the like.

3. We are brought to this dilemma, either to commence Baptists, as to the mode, or do as our fathers have done, confess the truth in theory, and neglect it in practice.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

BAPTISM.

S E R M O N III.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

MEN, brethren, and fathers, we are still upon a very important subject—a subject which highly concerns us as Christians—a subject in which our feelings, our reputation, and our peace too, may not be a little concerned. Many things, not to say every thing, call upon us not to go too fast ; and, at the same time, obedience to our common Lord forbids all backwardness, in pursuing where his truth and Spirit lead us.

All which I request of you is, with candour hear, with readiness obey, what truth shall dictate.

Should we, after long and serious deliberation, be obliged to believe and practise differently from what we have heretofore done, we shall be much exposed to two things : one is, to be reviled ; the other, to revile again.

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What we shall need is, patience to bear the one, and grace that we may avoid the other.

Perhaps human nature is more inclined to nothing than to an overbearing spirit. It is perfectly consonant with human nature to make ourselves, and not the scriptures, the standard of both faith and practice. The natural consequence of this is censure against all who dare to think, or act, as we do not. To guard you against unreasonable and common prejudice, I will, for your consideration, suggest a thought, which we may do well to remember; and it is this: many, who shall believe and practise as we have long done, may be as honest and faithful as we then were. This being true, the following consequence is plain, that the line of conduct which the Baptists ought to have practised, in months and years past, towards us, the same, if we be Baptists, will it become us to pursue with relation to others. It requires not much foresight to discover, that we shall need much of that wisdom which is profitable to direct.

Whilst it may be indispensable with us to use every prudent mean to diffuse that light which God may graciously afford us, it will be our wisdom to do every thing in such a manner as not to heighten, but, if possible, to lower, the prejudices of good people.

Whilst you, my dear friends and people, know that light chaseth away the darkness, and that truth will ultimately prevail against every error; I solicit your candour and prayerful attention, that error may not be retained, or prevail against any of us, to our wounding.

Our attention hath already been called to the definition of a number of words, which relate to the ordinance of baptism, to the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which were supposed to throw
light

light upon the subject, and also to some evidence in support of the given definitions. As the great question turns upon what is commanded, and as that cannot be otherwise known than by making sure the import of the words used, we shall therefore search for additional light and certainty, by inquiring—

4. How the apostles and primitive Christians understood this matter, and how they practised.

If this can be made plain, then, perhaps, your mind will be satisfied, and your judgments made up.

I proceed to lay the evidence before you.

There appears no necessity of spending time to produce evidence that the apostles understood the matter to be as I have proved to you that it was: for they, no doubt, understood the words which Christ spake, and the commands which he gave; besides, if the apostles and primitive church practised thus, it is evident that they thus understood it; for doubtless they, especially the apostles, were honest men, and practised as they understood Jesus Christ to have directed them.

I will here make two observations to you; and I wish you to remember them.

The first is, no person should, especially in important matters, make up his judgment, that any particular subject is true, till he has evidence of its truth.

The other is, the best proof which the nature of any case admits of, may and ought to be considered as evidence, and so received by us, as to those things we are called to believe and practise.

There are different degrees of evidence: the highest kind produces knowledge. When the evidence is small, it produces a weak and dubious belief. But where it is such that, on supposition the thing be true, the evidence could

could not be greater than it is, there we are obliged to yield our assent, and we do violence to our reason if we will not believe.

The evidence, which we have with respect to the practice of the apostles in the matter of baptizing, differs in degree, and, in some measure, in kind, from the evidence which we have respecting the practice of the church in later ages as to the same matter. But if we have, with respect to the practice of both, the best evidence which the different cases admit of, we are under obligation to believe the evidence good, and the facts true which are supported by it.

We have much the same kind of evidence with respect to the practice of the apostles, which we have as to the practice of the church for many ages after them. Mr. Baxter, bishop Hoadly, and others, testify, that the apostolic practice was, immersion. We have, moreover, as to their practice, a much higher kind of evidence. In support of their practice, I shall produce the best kind of evidence, and afterwards, whilst speaking of the practice of the church in succeeding ages, may occasionally bring forward some of the other kind of evidence, in support of the apostles' practice.

As to the practice of the apostles, in the administration of baptism, I observe, we have in the scriptures four distinct sources of evidence. The

1st Is this. When baptism is mentioned by the disciples and apostles, and the common word is not used, they uniformly employ one particular word, and this word is of very determinate signification, and expresses the bathing, or washing, of the body in water, as *Heb. x. 22*: Having our bodies (*leloumenoi*) washed with pure water. *Acts xxiii. 16*. Arise and be baptized, and (*apoulousai*)

loufai) wash away thy sins. 1 Cor. vi. 11. But ye are (*apolousfathē*) washed. By the determinate signification of this word, their practice appears to be immersion.

2. The apostles were commanded to dip, immerse or plunge all over in water the persons whom they admitted to this ordinance. This is evident from the determinate signification of the word to baptize. Says the command, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. We have before proved what is the signification of this word, and consequently what Christ commanded his disciples, when he sent them to baptize.

I do not now say that the apostles immersed any; but this is what I say, they were commanded thus to do. I leave it for you to determine, whether they did, or whether they did not.

3. I observe to you, that the New Testament, wherever it speaks of the apostles baptizing any, says they immersed them, or dipt them all over in water. For this is the plain, literal and common, if not the only, signification of the word. I still leave it with you to determine whether the apostles did, or did not, practise thus.

Left some of you may have forgotten what I have before proved to you, and consequently entertain some doubt, whether baptism may not sometimes signify the application of water in a different way; we will make two or three observations.

1. The plain, literal and common signification of the word is to immerse, overwhelm, dip, or to plunge all over.

2. There appears to be no evidence, that it is ever used, so much as once, in any part of the Bible, to signify the application of water in any other sense. Even in those passages where I have, in time past, supposed that

the meaning might be, and probably was, *washing*, without immersion, the sense appears to be, putting into water, or immersion, and not what we commonly understand by the word washing. Of this you may be convinced, by considering the treatment to which the Jews were accustomed with respect to those vessels which were ceremonially unclean. They were to baptize them, or put them into water, as you may see, *Levit. xi. 32*: "And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack; *whatsoever vessel* it be, where in any work is done, it must be *put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed."

3. I will observe to you, that it would, most visibly, be a reflection upon the Great Teacher, who came from God, to suppose that he should, when appointing a positive institution, use words aside from their plain and commonly received sense, that too without giving any intimation of his using the words in any sense differing from the common, especially when he was setting up a new institution, about which his most faithful followers could, in all succeeding generations, know nothing but from the words used in, and about, the institution. Does not all this appear plain and reasonable?

Now the Bible, in the plain, literal and common sense of the words which it uses, says, the apostles dipt, plunged, or immersed, all such as they admitted to baptism. You will judge for yourselves whether the apostles practised thus, or whether they did not.

4. The practice of the apostles is farther illustrated and confirmed by what Paul tells the Roman and Colossian Christians, with respect to what took place when they received the ordinance of baptism. He says to the former,

former, "We are buried with him by baptism into death:" To the other he says, "Buried with him in baptism." Paul speaks of this matter as a thing perfectly understood by Christians in his time, and used it as an argument to promote their weanedness from the world, and growth in sanctification. But have not you either passed over these and similar passages, without noticing them, or considered them rather hard to be understood? But how easy is it to understand them, provided the apostles practised as the scriptures say they did! I still leave it with you to determine for yourselves, how the apostles practised.

This is the best evidence which the nature of the subject admits. This matter, the apostles' practice, was transacted many ages since. We have the testimony of the scriptures as to what it was; this is evidence enough: however, we shall occasionally add the testimony of men.

We shall now attend to the practice of the church, and discover, if we can, how it was for ages after the apostles. The best evidence which this part of my subject admits is that of human testimony.* I by no means rest the merit of the cause on this evidence. At the same time, it may weaken the prejudices of some, and be a mean of confirming others in the belief of the truth.

** Christ's promise to his apostles, to their successors, and to the Church, may assure us, that the ordinance of baptism, by which his people should be distinguished from the world, would ever continue. Therefore could we know what the church hath always practised, especially that part of it which hath been most separate from the world, then their practice would afford a strong argument in favour of what the institution intended.*

It appears so plain a case, that we can hardly refuse assent to it, that as the church hath, for a series of ages, practised, so have they believed. When we shall see what their practice hath been, we shall the more easily concede that their belief hath been similar.

What is now before us is to produce and to receive evidence relative to the practice of the primitive church. It is the following :—

1. This evidence consists in the united testimony of both those who practised the administration of the ordinance by immersion, and those who used sprinkling, and called it baptizing.

Mosheim, a very noted church historian, and not very friendly to the Baptists, bears direct testimony, that John, Christ's forerunner, and the church, in the first ages of Christianity, practised immersion as the mode of baptizing. The following you may take as a sample of his evidence. "The exhortations of this respectable Messenger (John) were not without effect, and those who, moved by his solemn admonition, had formed the resolution of correcting their evil dispositions, and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of immersion, or baptism."*

Speaking of the church in the second century, he says, "The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil, in his pompous allurements, were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom by a solemn invocation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, according to the *Express Command* of our blessed Lord. †

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* *Century I. chap. iii. sect. 3.*

† *Cent. II. part ii. chap. v. sect. 12.*

The Doctor, speaking of some inferior sects of the seventeenth century, and particularly of a sect called Collegiants, says, "Those adult persons, that desire to be baptized, receive the sacrament of baptism according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that institution, even by *immersion*."*

Mr. Bailey, in his Etymological English Dictionary, says, "In ancient times, this (baptism) being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river, &c. and were plunged."

John Calvin, in his *Institutions*, book IV. chap. xv. sect. 19, says, "It is certain that the manner of dipping was used of the old church."

Here are three substantial witnesses. These might be sufficient, seeing there is not one to be found who will, or dares, give direct and positive testimony against the truth of what these affirm. But since there are an host who stand ready to give in their testimony, even against their own practice, we will hear what two more of them will testify, relative to the important cause now on trial.

These two shall be Dr. Cave and the famous Mr. Baxter.

Dr. Cave, a great searcher into antiquity, says, "That the party baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water, which was the *common, constant and universal custom* of those times; whereby they did significantly express the great end and effects of baptism, representing Christ's death, burial and resurrection; and, in conformity thereto, our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life," &c.†

Most

* Vol. v. p. 488. † Ten Letters.

Most remarkable is the testimony which Mr. Baxter gives to this truth, in the following words : " It is commonly confessed by us to the Baptists, (as our commentators declare) that in the apostles' time, the baptized were dipped over head in water, and this signifieth their profession both of believing the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of their own dying unto sin, and living, or rising again, to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the Apostle expoundeth baptism, *Col. ii. 12,* and *Rom. iv. 6.* And though (saith he) we have thought it lawful to disuse the manner of dipping, and to use less water, yet we presume not to change the use and signification of it; so then he that signally professes to die and rise again in baptism with Christ, doth *signally* profess *saving faith* and *repentance*; but *this* do all they that are baptized according to the apostolic practice."*

As these witnesses testify, so do all learned and pious men who have critically attended to this subject, and afterwards given in any direct and positive evidence upon the matter.

2. The evidence, as to the practice of the primitive church, consists in the testimony of men to this truth, that the church did for thirteen hundred years practise immersion, some extreme cases excepted.

The only evidence which I purpose to give in support of this, for the present, is the testimony of the author of *Ten Letters*, to bishop Hoadly upon the mode and subjects of baptism, and the confession of Dr. Lathrop that it was even so.

The author of the *Letters* asserts that this was the practice:

* *Ten Letters,*

tice of the church for thirteen hundred years after the commencement of the Christian era. Dr. Lathrop assents that this was the fact ; as you may see, by reading his four sermons on baptism, where he gives these letters a particular attention, and is supposed to assent, where he makes no objection.

3. All the churches in Europe, Asia and Africa, ever have done, and do now, practise immersion, save those who are now, or have been, under the jurisdiction of the Pontiffs of Rome.

The same witnesses, who bore their testimony to the last particular, give in their evidence in support of this, and in the same way ; the one asserting the fact, the other assenting that it is even so.

4. The very reasons which have been given, and which are still given, to justify the contrary practice, are a plain confession that immersion, or burying the subjects under water, was the practice of the apostles and primitive church in the ordinance of baptism, and what Christ commanded to be done.

The reasons which are alledged why sprinkling may be substituted for immersion, are, the want of health, in some instances where they suppose baptism to be necessary ; the weakness of constitution with respect to some, and the coldness of climate with respect to many, and as to all in northern climes in the wintry season. Here is a silent acknowledgement, that it is not the institution, that it is not the permission, of Christ, but mere accidental and local circumstances, which make it lawful to lay by the command of Christ, and to receive in its stead the precepts and commandments of men.

Mr. Bailey says, in his dictionary, that baptism was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dipping.

ping the persons all over, but in process of time, in the western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in the place of dipping.

Dr. Lathrop, in his Sermons, implicitly confesses the following extracts to be both true and genuine.

Mr. Baxter, in his *Paraphrase on the New Testament*, observes on Matth. iii. 6, "We grant that baptism then was by washing the whole body; and did not the difference of our cold country, as to that hot one, teach us to remember, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice' it should be so here."

The author of the *Letters to bishop Headly*, in the twenty-third page, writes thus: "Mr. Baxter, we have already seen, excuses the matter by the coldness of our climate. Calvin, the celebrated reformer of Geneva, observes in his Exposition of *Acts* viii. 38, 'We see here what was the baptismal rite among the ancients, for they plunged the whole body in the water.' Now it is the custom for the minister to sprinkle only the body, or head, and he too excuses this sprinkling, but how, I cannot well recollect, not having his book at hand."

Bishop Burnet, though he thus describes the primitive baptism, "With no other garments but that might serve to cover nature, they at first laid them down, as a man is laid in the grave, and then they said these words, I baptize, or wash, thee in the name, &c. Then they raised them up again, and clean garments were put upon them; from whence came the phrases of being baptized into Christ's death, of being buried with him by baptism into death, of our being risen with Christ, and of our putting on the Lord Jesus Christ; of putting off the old man, and putting on the new,"—and though he justly observes, that sacraments are positive precepts,

precepts, which are to be measured only by the institution, in which there is not room left for us to carry them any farther ;—yet forgetting his own measure of the institution, viz. the party baptized was laid down in the water, as a man is laid in the grave, he says, “ The danger in cold climates may be a very good reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling.”*

I propose, for the present, to note but one quotation more, and that shall be in the words of Dr. Wall, as quoted in the *letters*. The Doctor in giving the reasons why, in Queen Elizabeth’s reign, the custom of dipping was laid aside, observes, “ It being allowed to weak children to be baptized by affusion, many sound ladies and gentlemen first, and then, by degrees, the common people, would obtain the favour of the priest to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in the water.”† Now,

6. It may be easy for you to gather what is the outward and visible part of the ordinance of baptism.

It is to immerse proper subjects in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This is the outward and visible part of baptism, the scriptures being judge ; this literal and plain meaning of the command being judge ; the practice of the apostles being judge ; the practice of the church for more than a thousand years being judge ; and even if we appeal to those who refuse to practise thus, they add their testimony, that this is what was commanded. They pretend nor to say, that any new command hath been given, or that the old one hath ever been changed. What shall we say to these things !!!

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* *Burnet’s Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles.*

† *Vol. II. p. 30, 1 Ed.*

I conclude, by submitting a question, and a few inferences, for your consideration.

The question is, If immersion be from heaven, and sprinkling from men, by what authority do we continue the practice?

The inferences are—

1. We, who call ourselves Pædobaptists, are as a house divided against itself. To say the least, we appear thus. Our champions will look us in the face, and assure us, that the Baptists have plain scripture for their mode, and yet we have a right to choose on the score of convenience, &c. what mode is pleasing to us. Thus say Calvin, Hoadly, Owen, and others: whilst in their practice they have been, in this instance, like the servant who knew but did not his lord's will. These good men have confessed rather too much for the credit of their practice, and our comfort while copying it. Many, however, have risen up in defence of our fathers' practice and ours. They invent many ingenious hypotheses to prove it from heaven, but not one affords a solid conclusion, which shows it to be so.

2. According to the light which for the present appears, we cannot but conclude, that our definitions of baptism and to baptize are scriptural, accurate and just. If we will do the will of God, we must practise what he commands.

3. It appears that it is not left with us to choose what mode we will practise in administering or in receiving the ordinance of baptism; for we find but one mode to it: and we must practise this, or none. We may sprinkle a person in the name of the Father, &c. and we may wash the face, or any part of a person, in the same sacred name; but it is not possible to baptize a person in this

this way. For sprinkling, or any small, partial washing, never was, is not now, nor ever will be, what the scriptures mean by Christian baptism.

4. That a person must be greatly unacquainted with the plain, literal, scripture account of baptism, or extremely prejudiced, not to say perverse, to affirm, that the Bible says nothing about immersion, or burying in water, for baptizing. For it speaks of this mode, and of no other, in the application of water as a gospel ordinance.

The Baptists have for their mode the broad *basis* of scripture, antiquity, and the uninterrupted, and somewhat universal, practice of the church.

5. It appears that for well informed Pædobaptists to oppose the Baptists, as to their mode of baptizing, is very great wickedness. For the Baptists have the advantage of plain and express scripture on their side, and the learned, critical and candid Pædobaptists know it.

Ignorance is the best and only excuse which we can make for ourselves for any opposition which we have made against the ancient and primitive mode which the Baptists have practised in the administration of the ordinance. Our contention in this matter hath not been against the Baptists merely, but it hath been against their Lord and ours.

Dr. Lathrop appears generously to grant the truth, that immersion is scripture baptism, and only contends that sprinkling be also allowed; which every candid mind would readily do, were there one text of scripture to support it.

6. No true Christian, if he knew what he did, would ever make light of immersion, which the Lord commands, and the Baptists practise, as the mode of baptizing, or, more strictly, as baptism itself.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

BAPTISM.

S E R M O N IV.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

WHILST discoursing to you upon these words, I have, as I suppose, proved to you what is the outward and visible part of baptism. You have, to appearance, given a serious and solemn attention, and, I hope, a candid one, to what hath been said.

All which I ask of you in this matter is, that you, in the spirit of meekness, hear the whole, and then judge and practise, in such a manner, as you cannot refuse to do, without doing violence to your reason, and without disobedience to the command of Heaven.

Some of you may be afraid of discord; but whence, I pray you, will discord arise among brethren? Will a candid, prayerful and self denying attention to truth cause this feared discord? Hath truth a tendency to produce

produce discord among the faithful followers of the Lamb of God? I know that once, when Christ preached the doctrines of the cross, multitudes of professing disciples went back, and followed no more with him. I hope it will not be thus with any of you. But, my brethren, however it may be with any of you, one thing is clear—I ought, I must, declare to you, so fast as I profitably can, all those truths of God, which appear necessary to build you up in sound faith and holy practice.

As I have said before, so say I unto you again, that all which I ask of you is, to give truth a candid hearing, and yield your assent, when facts are plainly proved.

Nothing should, by me, be thought too much to be done, to clear away from your minds the darkness of prejudice, together with any erroneous belief and practice which you may have imbibed, in part, by my means. I shall, therefore, in this discourse, after having attended to the purport, end or design of baptism, answer some objections, which may for the present obstruct the force of truth.

Before we proceed to the particular business of this discourse, you will, if you please, attend for a minute to a few questions and their answers.

1. Is it not a plain case, that it is my duty to deliver to you the whole counsel of God, according to the best light it may please him to afford me?

2. Is it not equally plain, that your duty is to yield, not to me, but to the truths which I deliver, an obedient ear?

3. Should you, from an uncandid and prejudiced mind, refuse to be converted by the truth, will the fault be mine?

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4. Should I exhibit full evidence, as to the subject on hand, and exhibit that evidence clearly too, or should it be that I have done this, and yet great difficulties should arise, will you be justified should you lay the blame to me?

5. Should I teach you the truth, and produce all the evidence which you can ask for, and you should, all, like faithful Christians, believe it, where or whence will arise any difficulty among us? Should any of you refuse to believe, will you charge your difficulties to my account?

6. Are not all of you determined that you will hear candidly, and believe upon evidence?

You will please to give a Christian and judicious answer to each of these questions, and let your practice be conformed with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having laid before you the principal part of the facts and evidence, which I intended, as to the visible and outward part of baptism, now—

Lastly, The purport, end and design of the Baptismal institution may call for some attention.

The purport, end or design of this Christian ordinance, or institution, appears to be—

: 1. For a dividing line between the kingdom of our Lord, and the kingdoms of this world.

John was Christ's forerunner: he was sent before his face to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord;* and that Christ should be made manifest to Israel, therefore, says John, am I come baptizing with water.† John's mission comprehended a double purpose, to make ready a people, prepared

* Luke i. 17. † John i. 31.

prepared for the Lord, and to manifest Him unto Israel. The people which he instrumentally made ready, and prepared to receive the Lord, he baptized; and it appears from his rejecting many of the Pharisees and Sadduces, that he intentionally baptized none other.* The whole discourse which he had with them, *Matt.* iii. 7 to 12, is good evidence that he admitted none to baptism but such as brought forth visible fruits of repentance. Such persons he admitted among that people which he was making ready for the Lord. This people were, when prepared, to compose that kingdom, or the beginning of that kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and which is an everlasting kingdom, which shall stand forever: *Daniel* ii. 44, and vii. 27. This kingdom Christ calls the kingdom of heaven, and says, it is not of this world.

It appears to be this kingdom, which was now at hand, almost ready to be set up, of which Christ speaks to Nicodemus, when he says, *John*, iii. 5, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

All this does, for substance, meet the sentiment of Baptists and Pædobaptists on this subject. Both suppose, that none can belong to this kingdom without being born of water, or baptized. Both suppose that men may professedly, or visibly, belong to this kingdom, without being born of the Spirit: but, perhaps, neither the Baptists, nor Pædobaptists, would say, that any do, strictly speaking, belong to this kingdom, except they have been born of water and of the Spirit. Our Lord saith, Verily, verily, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. If a man cannot enter into this kingdom but in this way, he cannot belong to it in any other.

Both

* *Matt.* iii. 7.

Both sides grant, that baptism, or to be born of water, is the only way of admittance into this kingdom. They are not so well agreed as to what it is to be born of water, whether it be to be sprinkled, washed, or immersed. Concerning this matter you must judge for yourselves.

This being a given point, that the design of baptism is, that it should be for a dividing line between that kingdom, which the God of heaven was to set up in the latter day, and this world, I would suggest for your consideration—Which draws the line of separation most clearly between this kingdom and all other kingdoms on earth; to enter it by being sprinkled; or by being visibly and actually buried in water, and rising as it were from the dead, to join this kingdom?

I will also suggest one thing more for your consideration: Which hath the most direct and natural tendency to cause Christ's kingdom to appear to be, as it really is, not of this world? to have almost all admitted into it, in infancy, and so in unbelief, and all by sprinkling, or by a little water put upon the face, and the greater part of them living in open wickedness, or manifest unbelief, and unnoticed by the church to which they are supposed to belong; or, to have none admitted but professed believers, and these admitted in a way which significantly says, that they turn their backs upon the world; yea, that they are dead to the world, and are risen with Christ. I only suggest this for your consideration. I hope to attend to it in its place, but not to-day.

2. The purport, end or design of baptism appears to be for a manifestation, that the subjects of it have forsaken all, yes, their own lives, for Christ's sake and the gospel.

How can this be more visibly manifested, than by
being

being buried with him in baptism? How can a man more visibly forsake all, than he does when buried? How can any one more manifestly forsake his own life for another, than by voluntarily submitting himself into the hands of another to be buried alive?

Is not this agreeable to what Christ saith, Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple?

3. It appears to be for a representation of our being washed from our sins in the blood of the Lamb.

John, the revelator, saith, speaking of Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." This is a figurative expression, showing at once the procuring cause, the blood of Christ, and the gracious effect, our souls purged from dead works to serve the Living God. Can any natural sign represent this more fully, than does baptism, in which our bodies are washed with pure water?

4. The purport, end or design of this Christian ordinance appears to be for the promotion of piety in individuals, and purity in the church.

What can have a stronger tendency to move the heart of a Christian to piety and weanedness from the world, than has the institution of baptism? Seeing at every remembrance of it, he is put in mind, how Christ died *for sin*, and how every one who hath believed and been baptized, has by the ordinance signally died *to sin*, been buried from the world, and raised again to newness of life. Hath not this ordinance also an equally strong tendency to preserve the purity of the church, should it be administered as we have proved it ought to be, by immersion only? and should another thing be found to be true, that visible believers only should be admitted to it, what

a world of unbelievers would this shut out of the church ! How differently would the professed church of Jesus Christ appear from what it now does !

If my information be correct, every natural born subject of the crown of England is, according to the laws of their national church, to be baptized, and immediately considered as a member of the church. This is, indeed, consistent, if all the parents have, in any past period, been profelyted to the Christian religion, and if baptism have come into the place of circumcision, and to be administered to children and infants, as that was.

Not only so, but probably nine tenths of the inhabitants of New England, if not of our nation, belong to the church, according to the professed belief of the Pædobaptists. Upon the same principle I presume that more than three fourths of all the adults in this and the neighbouring towns belong to the church, and have, if the principle be according to the gospel, a right to require admittance to the Lord's supper, and baptism for their children. Then, upon the same principle, would their children be members of the church, and entitled to all the privileges of God's house, as they come to years, and nothing short of gross immorality could justify their exclusion. Does this look as though Christ's kingdom were not of this world ?

5. The purport, end or design of baptism appears to be well described by Dr. Goodwin, in the following words : " The eminent thing signified and represented in baptism is not singly the blood of Christ, as it *washes* us from our sins, but there is a farther representation therein of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, in the baptized : and this is not in a bare conformity to Christ, but is a representation of a communion with Christ in his death.

death and resurrection; therefore it is said, We are buried with him in baptism, and wherein we are risen with him, &c. And moreover, here it is that the answer of a good conscience, which is made the inward effect of this ordinance, 1 Peter, iii. 21, is there also attributed to Christ's resurrection, as the thing signified and represented in baptism; and as the cause of that answer of a good conscience, even baptism doth now save us, as it is a figure of salvation by Christ."

6. The purport, end or design of the ordinance appears to be to point out, or shadow forth, the forgiveness or remission of sins, and the being cleansed from them. Hence the propriety of scripture expressions, which are like the following: The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, *Mark i. 4.* Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, *Acts xxii. 16.* Here it is worthy of the critical reader's notice, that the word translated, *wash away*, is *apolousai*, which signifies to wash clean, or to wash out a stain, as well as to wash away. It is also worthy to be observed, that the word *louō*, whence this is derived, is the only word, or theme, save *baptizō*, which, in the New Testament, signifies to wash the body. This being well considered, it cannot be doubted, but baptism is a most significant representation of the remission of sin, or cleansing from it.

Lastly. The purport, end and design of the ordinance of baptism appears to be, for an open and manifest declaration that those who receive it, do heartily, and of a ready mind, put on Christ, enter into his service, receive him to be their Prophet, Priest and King, and covenant to be for him, and for him only. Accordingly it is said, As many as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: They have put on his name, his self-denying profession, his suffering, despised, but glorious cause.

Is the purport, end and design of baptism as hath been now stated, then the mode is immersion; and those who change the *ordinance* from *dipping* to *sprinkling*, and apply it to unbelievers, *pervert the ordinance*, lose its import, and make it quite another thing. This we have; for years, ignorantly done.

We will now attend to the arguments, which the late Rev. John Cleaveland hath left us in support of *sprinkling*, as being authentic baptism. This Mr. Cleaveland was, and I believe justly too, esteemed as one of the most pious and faithful servants of Christ. Whilst I was favoured with a personal acquaintance with him, he stood very high in my estimation, for his unaffected piety, and fervent simplicity, as a preacher of the everlasting gospel. I still retain the same opinion of the good man. But great and good men are not always wise. In any instance where their wisdom hath failed them, we should be careful how we follow. The Bereans would not take Paul for a guide, without first bringing him to the standard of divine truth. The Bereans were justified. Should we treat Mr. C. in the same way, he could not, and I am inclined to think, he would not, though he were living, condemn us. I might let his works and arguments in support of sprinkling, sleep, were it not, that some of you, my people, and perhaps others, may by them, in one particular, be kept from beholding Christ, as in an open glass.

The good man's object was, to prove that baptism by sprinkling is authentic, or is scriptural; or that sprinkling is baptism.

I will now lay before you his supposed strong arguments by which he supports the validity of sprinkling for baptizing. After stating the principles of the Baptists, as to the ordinance now considering, his

1st Argument

1st Argument is, " Their learned men know that the word *baptizō* in *Luke* xi. 38, and *baptismos* in *Mark* vii. 2—5, are used to signify the same as *nīptō* is, i. e. proper washing, or making clean by the application of water, in cases that do not necessarily require dipping as the mode of washing." The answer to this is: That neither the learned men among the Baptists, nor the learned among any other class of men, know any such thing. Besides, *baptizō*, in *Luke*, and *baptismos*, in *Mark*, have reference to, and mean, a ceremonial, a religious, or rather, as may be more properly called in these instances, a superstitious washing. What is meant by a ceremonial washing, you may see by looking into the ceremonial law: *Levit.* xi. 32, and in *Numb.* xix. 19, where you will find that this ceremonial washing was, to put into water, or to bathe one's flesh in water. You hence see that these two passages, with which Mr. Cleaveland lays the foundation of his support of sprinkling for baptism, utterly fail him, and come in as auxiliaries to confirm immersion as the only scripture baptism. I will not say that *nīptō* is never used to signify ceremonial washing, and so intend the washing, or putting the hands into water, (*pugnō*) with abundance of exactness, as Dr. Doddridge expounds it, or up to the elbows, as L'Enfant renders it. But one thing is evident to all who will examine the texts, and compare them with the ceremonial washings of the ceremonial law, in conformity with which the Jewish doctors meant to have their traditional ceremonies, that *baptizō* and *baptismos* are not used in the sense in which *nīptō* generally is. In every point of view, Mr. Cleaveland's texts utterly fail him, and go to destroy the custom or tradition he brought them to support. Besides, I do not find that *baptizō* is used, in any place,

for

for washing the hands, or for washing or dipping a part of the body, or any other thing. Mr. Cleaveland's

2d Argument is built upon *Hebrews ix. 10*, where the Apostle speaks of (*diaphorais baptismois*) divers washings. Here, where the Apostle is speaking of divers ceremonial washings, or bathings, Mr. Cleaveland, without the least possible evidence, concludes the Apostle means divers sprinklings.

The same answer which was given to the first argument belongs to this, as Mr. Cleaveland has produced no evidence, that (*baptismois*) washings, or bathings, means sprinklings, save that in the 13th and 21st verses. The Apostle makes use of the word sprinkle, when speaking of the application of blood, and speaking of the unclean, says, they are *ransomed*, and adds, almost all things are by the law purged, *catherized*, not *baptized*, with blood. It is not a little surprising that a man of Mr. Cleaveland's good sense should say, and that Dr. Lathrop, and other men of erudition, should follow him, in saying, these different sprinklings, in the 13th and 21st verses, refer to *baptismois*, when, had they looked three words farther, they would have found them to be, *kai dikaiōmazi sarkos*, the literal English of which is, "The ordinances of God concerning the ceremonial rites of bloody sacrifices!" Had they looked into their Greek testaments, they might, with ease, have seen that their argument would not bear examination. Surely, had these gentlemen had the right of the question, they never would have compelled the Apostle to explain by the sprinkling of blood, what he meant by bathings or washings with water. Perhaps a more forced exposition of scripture is seldom heard. Besides, the Apostle told them, by placing what is translated, carnal ordinances, between divers washing in the

10th, and sprinkling in the 13th and 21st verses, that he intended no such thing as they supposed. If I mistake not, Mr. C's

3d Argument is an attempt to prove that *baptō* and *baptizō* are used to signify something more than to dip, put into water, &c. When the good man brought forward his argument he forgot—&c.—which belongs to his quotation from Dr. Gale, and which includes immersion and overwhelming, and which comprises the whole which Mr. C. has proved that *baptizō* signifies. But, waving his forgetfulness, we will attend to what he says. All which he appears to do here is, to show that *baptō*, or *baptizō*, are used to wash, dip and wet with sprinkling the dew from heaven, and to overwhelm. That is, *baptō* signifies to dip, put into water, wet with the dew of heaven, &c. and *baptizō* signifies to dip, put into water and overwhelm. What is the consequence? According to Mr. C. it is this: Because *baptō* is sometimes used to signify one's being wet with the distilling dew of heaven, &c. therefore *baptizō* signifies the same thing: Because *baptō* signifies in one place to wash without dipping, therefore *baptizō* signifies to wash without dipping; and because *baptō* is sometimes used to signify to colour, or stain, by aspersion, or the like, therefore *baptizō* is used in the same sense; therefore sprinkling is authentic baptism. What evidence, I pray you, my hearers, is there in all this? Yes, what show or appearance of evidence is there in all this? Would ten thousand such arguments afford you the least conviction, or gain your assent, where you had a cent to lose?

Every person of sense, who is acquainted with the Greek, would, generally speaking, allow Mr. C's premises, that *baptō*, in different places, signifies the application

tion of water in different ways ; and that *baptizō* sometimes signifies overwhelming. But no person, who understands the matter, will allow his conclusion, for it hath no connection with the premises.

His argument, in plain English, is this : The verb to wet, sometimes signifies to sprinkle, as in a heavy dew we say it sprinkles, or wets ; the verb to overwhelm sometimes signifies to cover all over with water, as is the beach, by the flowing of the tide. Of consequence, to overwhelm is to sprinkle ; therefore to sprinkle is authentic overwhelming, or baptism. The fallacy of this argument is easily detected, and with the same ease may any one who knows the different significations of *baptō* and *baptizō*, uncover the fallacy and complete inconclusiveness of Mr. C's argument.

The plain truth is, he hath done his side a disservice, for by searching he hath found, and implicitly acknowledges, though not intentionally, and (I suppose) without knowing it, that no instance can be found where *baptizō* signifieth the application of water by sprinkling, or any other way, which does not imply overwhelming, or washing, that is, a ceremonial washing, which is bathing, or putting into water. But—

4. There is another argument upon which Mr. Cleaveland chiefly dwells, and upon which he appears greatly to rest the defence of his whole cause. It is his strong hold against immersion, and for sprinkling ; and it is this : Baptism with water, or baptism as a Christian ordinance is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I have no where found that he hath proved that this is the great and principal thing which baptism signifies ; nor do I by any means obtain conviction that the mode of baptizing is to be determined, with certainty,

certainty, from this particular thing, even should it be granted that one important design of baptism is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. But, as Mr. C. seems to depend more upon the strength of this argument than he does upon the strength of any other, we will grant, for the present, that baptism with water was appointed particularly, if not mainly, to set forth the mode in which Christ baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Now the great question is, In what manner, or mode, by sprinkling, or overwhelming, did Christ Jesus baptize with the Holy Ghost? Mr. C. in his treatise, replies abundantly, by sprinkling, certainly. We will put this subject to the test, by instancing the most remarkable season which ever was, in which Christ, in a most remarkable, public and astonishing degree, was baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I presume, were Mr. C. now alive, he could not, with any face of propriety, object, against taking as a sample for the whole, the most remarkable instance which ever hath been, and, perhaps, which ever will be, exhibited of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I am willing to submit the strong argument of Mr. C. to this great sample of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Are not all you, my hearers, willing to leave the weight of his argument to such a decision? I am persuaded, you all say, Yes.

We will then bring his argument to the proposed test. The instance which we will take, for surely it is the most astonishing one, is that which Christ foretold, as related, *Mat. i. 5*: "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." The accomplishment of this prediction and promise we have related in the four first verses of the next chapter. It is thus: When the day of Pentecost was
F fully

fully come, they were all with one accord, in one place. And suddenly there was a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

Here was, truly, a wonderful instance of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

Here, 1. All the house was filled with the sound, wind or Spirit from heaven. 2. Cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 3. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

We here see that they were all overwhelmed, for all the house, where they were sitting, was filled, and not only were they all overwhelmed, but they were also filled.

It is left with you to determine, what becomes of Mr. C's argument, upon which he lays so much stress, and of which he speaks with so much confidence, and not unfrequently with an air of triumph. Is there a word about sprinkling in any part of it? or is there any thing which looks like it? Does it not look considerably like immersion, or overwhelming? At least, does it not favour immersion, or overwhelming, as much as it does sprinkling? If so, then it proves nothing for sprinkling. It is left with you to determine which side it favours.

It is possible, however, that some of you may suppose, that Mr C. might intend *that* baptism, if it may be so called, which the Holy Ghost ministers, when it creates the soul anew. To this supposition, I will just observe, "The wind bloweth (saith Christ) where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell *whence* it cometh, or *whither* it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Would it not be extreme folly to suppose that

that water baptism represents the *operations* of the Spirit, when none can know whence it cometh, or whither it goeth? It may represent the effect of the Spirit's operations, and it is called, a being born, not sprinkled, of the Spirit.

5. In reading Mr. C's defence of sprinkling, as being authentic baptism, I noticed but one more distinct argument, and it is this :

"*Niptō, baptizō, louō, breshō, plunō, or apoplunō*, all signify to wash." The conclusion which he draws from this is, in short, the following : To baptize is not to immerse, but to sprinkle. I see no connection between his premise and conclusion. Besides, Mr. C. tells us, page 80, that the Jews, by adhering to the tradition of the elders, observed the washing of hands, and divers other things, as a religious ceremony. Now, if all the words, which Mr. C. mentions, signify to wash, and yet some of them signify common washing, and another, and that *baptizō*, signifies ceremonial washing, and that be to put into water, as is the case, what does his argument prove? It proves just nothing to his point. Had he proved, what he hath not even attempted, that they all signify the same kind of washing, and that the washing signified was not immersion, but sprinkling only, then his conclusion would have followed, that sprinkling is baptism.

If the above arguments will not support Mr. Cleveland's theory, it must all come down, for they are the substance, if not all the arguments, which he hath adduced, and I presume better cannot be found.

I thought to have taken Dr. Lathrop's arguments upon the same subject, into consideration ; but upon re-examining them I find there is no material dissimilarity between his and Mr. C's ; they therefore both stand or fall

fall together. A word or two however may be here added.

Dr. Lathrop assures us that Cyprian, who wrote within about one hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling, says, "In the sacrament of salvation (that is baptism) when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." The Doctor adds, The ancients *practised immersion*."*

By this quotation of the Doctor's from Cyprian, and confession of his own, being put together, it appears, at once, that all his preceding arguments are erroneous. For Cyprian does not intimate that sprinkling was from heaven, but says it was from necessity. Besides, his calling baptism the sacrament of salvation, shows us the error, whence the necessity of sprinkling came, namely, a belief that the ordinance of baptism was necessary to salvation. This being the case, and it also being true, as the Doctor acknowledges, that the ancients practised immersion, save when necessity compelled, as they erroneously supposed, the consequence is fairly this, that immersion is from heaven, the ancients being judges; and that sprinkling is from men, from necessity, or rather from error.

I thought to have added no more upon the Doctor's mode of Christian baptism. However, one argument ought to be taken out of his hands, lest it misguide some of his readers. He tells us that *baptizō*, in *Mark* vii. and *Luke* xi. is used to signify the application of water to the hands. The only answer needed is, It is not thus said, in *Mark*, or *Luke*, or in any other part of the Bible.

Bible. When the Doctor shall re-examine the passages, he will, probably, see the mistake.

Will gentlemen, and Christians too, forever contend against *immersion*, the institution of heaven, and for sprinkling, which hath nothing but *error* and *convenience* for its support!

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

BAPTISM.

SERMON V.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I HAVE confidence in you, brethren, that ye will keep the ordinances, as I shall deliver them to you, and prove them to be from the word of the Lord.

One thing I would still know of you, my brethren, whether you, like the more noble Bereans, will receive the word with readiness, searching the scriptures, daily, that you may know the truth of what you hear.

You will bear in mind, that whosoever loveth father or mother, house or lands, wife or children, more than Christ, is not worthy of him. If, through affection for any of these, you should refuse to obey Christ, it will be too evident that you love them more than you do him, and so are not worthy of him.

Should

Should you love any erroneous belief and practice more than you do the truths of Christ, you will, so far as you manifest it, prove that you are not worthy of him.

Should you despise me for delivering and vindicating the truths of Christ to you, you will, at the same time, despise him. You will therefore give good heed to what you say, and to what you do, in this matter : for if it be of God, it will stand, and none can overthrow it. It is hoped none of you will be found fighting against God.

This discourse may contain a review of what we have passed over, together with some application. In my first discourse to you on the subject, which we have still before us, the following are the principal things, to which we attended.

1. I proposed a number of plain truths, considered to be as first principles, for your attention.

1. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a Christian ordinance, but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit, have taught us.

2. All, which we are required to believe and practise, with respect to the Christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ, and by his Forerunner and Apostles.

3. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he no doubt delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject, that his disciples and immediate followers understood and practised, as he would have them.

4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is aside from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.

5. No

5. No man, nor body of men, hath any more authority to add to, or diminish from, this ordinance, than they have to institute a new one and call it Christ's.

6. Whenever, and wherever, the ordinance of baptism is so changed, as to lose the intent of the institution, then and there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

II. I defined for your information a number of words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism.

We found all these to be just as we might expect to have found them, provided immersion be baptism, or the mode in which it is administered.

Baptisterion, a place in which to wash the body. *Baptism*, immersion, or dipping one all over in water. *Baptizō* signifies to dip, or wash, the body all over in water. *Louō* (a word several times used in reference to, or signifying the same, as baptism) is, to wash, to rinse, to bathe, &c. Then

III. I set before you all the texts in the New Testament which relate either to the baptism of John, or to that of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the next place, I proposed for your meditation the passages of scripture where washing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are used. I then called your attention to those passages in which sprinkling is mentioned, and to the Greek words which are made use of. *Lastly*, I read to you those scriptures where to dip is mentioned, and also the Greek words which are rendered to dip.

In not one of the places, where the ordinance of baptism is brought to view, do we find one word about sprinkling, or any thing which looks like it. In every place, where to dip is mentioned, we find a near relation

to baptism; every word which is used, coming from the same *root* or theme, from which *baptizō* comes.

As to the word *wash*, we find no relation between the words which signify to wash, and those which signify to baptize, save in those few instances where the meaning is to wash the body, or put into water, or wash a thing all over. When we come to the Greek words which signify to sprinkle, we find no similarity, or likeness, between them and the word to baptize.

In all the places where baptizing is mentioned, not a word is used which looks like sprinkling; where sprinkling is mentioned, there is not a word used which appears like baptism.

In my next discourse, I produced my evidence, that my definitions of baptism and to baptize were accurate and just. I dwelt largely upon this evidence, for the merit of the whole subject depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the determinate meaning of the words, which our Lord used in the institution of the ordinance, and when speaking of it. When we know the determinate signification of his words, we know what he says, and what we ought to understand by the words which he uses. The evidence which I produced, was, in short, the following.

1. The Greek Lexicon, Butterworth's Concordance, Bailey's and Entick's dictionaries, bear their united testimony, that the plain, literal, and common, if not universal, signification of the words *baptism* and *to baptize*, is immersion and to immerse, bury in water, to dip, or to plunge, a person all over in water. Here are four learned and positive witnesses to the same thing. Indeed, they give no other signification, save it be to wash, which

which we have seen intends a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or to bathe.

2. I repeated some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism. John baptized in the river Jordan. He was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was *much water* there. The word *baptistry* signifies a place in which to wash the body all over. *Baptism* signifies to dip, to plunge, immerse, or to wash the body all over in water. *Baptizer* signifies one who dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water. *To baptize* signifies to immerse, plunge under water, or under any other liquid thing, or to dip, or to put into water. *To be baptized* is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

These things being true, is it not easy to determine what the ordinance of baptism signifies?

3. The words *baptismos* and *baptizō* have two, and only two, translations in the New Testament. These two are *baptism* and *washing*. Where their meaning is washing, or where they are thus translated, it is a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or bathe the flesh in water, as you may see, *Levit. xi. 32, Num. xix. 19*. When they are translated *baptism*, or to *baptize*, the thing intended is the baptism of water, of fire, of sufferings, or of the Holy Ghost.

4. I brought forward several noted witnesses, to bear their united testimony, that I had given a just definition of the word *baptizō*: these were, John Calvin, Zanchius and Dr. Owen.

In the next place I mentioned to you that Paul repeatedly uses the word *louō*, where he means the same thing as where he uses the word *baptizō*; that he uses these

these words as signifying the same thing. Whereas, *louō* signifies to wash and to bathe the body in water, and consequently *baptizō* means the same.

Lastly, I brought forward Paul's exposition of the word *baptism*, and showed you, that he expounds it, as being buried with Christ in baptism, or immersion.

In my discourse, which I next preached to you, I produced evidence, that the apostles and primitive Christians, not only understood the matter as I have described it, but practised accordingly.

In support of the apostles' practice, I observed, that the word *louō*, of determinate signification, which they used to signify their practice, or what was done by them in baptism, determines or fixes their practice to be immersion. I farther observed, that they were commanded to practise baptism, or to baptize, as I have described it; and that the scriptures testify, that they thus did; and also that the apostles say, the mode of baptizing in their day was, by burying the subjects, in baptism.

For witnesses that the primitive church practised immersion, we have Mosheim, Bailey, Calvin, Baxter, and many others, all agreeing in this one point, that the mode of baptizing, or baptism itself, among the ancients, was immersion. We have also evidence that the church thus practised, for thirteen hundred years, some extreme cases excepted. Moreover we have evidence that all the church, in Europe, in Asia, and in Africa, save that part of it, which is now, or hath been, under the bewildering power of the popes, do now, and ever have, practised immersion.

Besides all this, the very reasons which the Pædobaptists assign, why they have laid aside immersion, show that sprinkling is not commanded by the Lord, but is taught by the precepts of men.

You

You see we have an ocean of witnesses and evidence against us; and all, or nearly so, from our own denomination of Christians. What a world of evidence might we reasonably expect that the Baptists would be able to bring for themselves and against us and our practice, would we hear them, when our own side bring so much against their own practice and for the Baptists! Besides, this evidence appears to stand in its full force against us, there being no opposite evidence to weaken its force. Indeed we are, in this matter, much like criminals, who plead, at least the leaders of them, guilty to the whole indictment. However, some have made a full plea of not guilty, but in part. At the same time, numbers of them, in their plea, have convicted themselves of being guilty throughout.

In the last discourse, after holding to your view the purport, end and design of baptism, I examined one of their pleas of, not guilty. But what evidence did the good man give of his innocence? Can the largest stretch of charity allow more than this, *he knew not what he did?* Was truth ever brought to such straits as to require to be supported by such arguments?

APPLICATION.

FROM a review of the whole subject, the following appear to flow as necessary consequences.

1. Whether we allow immersion to be the scripture mode of baptism, and the only one which it requires, or not; one thing is clear, that we have as much evidence of its being so, as we could have, on supposition that it were.

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The scriptures declare, in various ways, that this is the mode, and mention no other. The scriptures expound themselves to mean immersion, or burying.

We find not a single trace, in all the scriptures, where the ordinance is spoken of, of any thing short of immersion being mentioned.

Good men, who are skilful in the true import of words, have agreed, that the plain, literal and accurate meaning of the word, to baptize, is to immerse or bury in water, &c. Nor have any been able to show that in any part of God's word it hath any opposite meaning or application.

The church of Jesus Christ have, in all ages, understood the matter of baptism as I have explained it. We must, however, except, for the last three or five hundred years, many of those branches of the church, which have been, or are now, under the jurisdiction of the church of Rome. The purport, end and design of baptism also intimate to us, that this is the manner of baptizing.

Indeed, if there be any words in the Greek language by which the Lord of the Baptismal Institution could have told us what he intended, the words used do this. For there are no two words in the language, or, at least, none which have come to our knowledge, which so literally, so uniformly, and so expressly, signify to immerse, or wash, or bathe the body in water, as do the words *baptizō*, and *louō*. Hence, if immersion be baptism, the Lord, if I may so say, could not have told us of it in the New Testament, if the words, chosen by the Holy Ghost, do not afford this information. If baptism be immersion, then the two most suitable words have been chosen to express it; but if sprinkling be baptism, two words which were farther from the point could not have

been found. We find no instance, in the bible, where they are thus used. In short, no two words, which mention the application of water in any way, are farther from the idea of sprinkling, than are those two which are used when baptism is intended. It therefore appears, that whilst we have used sprinkling for baptism, we have departed from the plain and primitive import of the words used, as far as we could without a complete omission of water. None can be at a farther remove from the instituted, scripture baptism, than we have been, without denying it in whole.

2. Error is very insinuating and deceiving. Surely it hath proved thus in the subject of sprinkling.

Cyprian, who wrote within about a hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling, says, as quoted by Dr. Lathrop, "In the sacrament of *salvation*, (i. e. baptism) when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters, do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." Here we see the origin of sprinkling for baptism.

It was an early error in the church, that baptism was necessary to salvation. Hence, when it was judged, that life would be endangered by immersion, the person must either lose his life by baptism, or lose his soul for want of being baptized, or some other mode must be invented. Or, if the sick person was nighly dying, he must be baptized without immersion, or probably lose his soul, before he could be conveyed where the ordinance might be administered. Under these circumstances, man's fruitful invention devised sprinkling as a substitute for baptism. Here is the origin of sprinkling, as the ancients have told us.

In process of time, sound ladies and gentlewomen wished

ed to have sprinkling substituted for baptism in their behalf ; afterwards others, till at last, it became a general custom in many of the European nations. In the mean time, the Baptists, and many others, objected against the practice, as being contrary from the command of Christ. Hence arose the necessity of defending it, or else having it considered as a departure from the faith. Matters being thus, the invention of many was in full exercise to defend sprinkling, as being of divine origin. A number of ceremonial rites of the Levitical law were prest into this service ; several passages of the New Testament were wrested from their natural meaning to a forced interpretation ; and out of the motley mixture were formed what were styled arguments ; but such arguments can stand no longer than while prejudice lives to support them.

However, the most disagreeable part is, a good number of very pious and learned men have been carried away in this whirlpool of deception. Their being deceived has deceived others ; and we are, or have been, among the deceived.

3. Sprinkling is not from heaven, but of men. This too, if I mistake not, by the fully and fairly implied confession of those, who have written in its defence.

If from heaven, why, in the first place, use it only when necessity compelled ! as was supposed to save souls from hell ? If from heaven, why, afterwards, use it only in cases of less urgent necessity ? If from heaven, why bring in the coldness of the country as an excuse for using it ? If from heaven, why not mentioned in the institution of the ordinance, or in some passage where mention is made of baptism, or in some other place in all the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles ? If from
heaven,

heaven, why not intimated as being so, by those who first introduced it? If sprinkling be from heaven, why so many *inconclusive* arguments in its support? Is the word of God deficient in this particular, and hath it revealed what cannot be supported by it? If from heaven, why not commanded, enjoined, required, or so much as once hinted, as being the mode of a gospel ordinance, in any part of that revelation which we have received from heaven?

4. Another consequence is, That the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, and for ought we know, the only mode, and necessary to the administration of the ordinance.

This is the plain, literal, scripture sense of baptism, therefore this is the plain, literal, scripture mode. The scriptures mention no other mode, therefore this may be, and is, for ought appears, the only scripture mode.

5. From what we have gone over, one thing appears certain. That Christ never commanded any of his followers to administer any gospel ordinance by sprinkling, and, at the same time, to say, *I baptize*. For to do thus would be to command them to do *one thing*, and to say that they did *another*.

To *sprinkle* is to *baptize*, which hath no visible connection with baptism. To say, Christ commanded his disciples to *baptize*, and, at the same time, to say, *We baptize*, is what no Christian would, knowingly, be willing to say. This would, if I mistake not, be making Christ the minister of sin. But what I have long, implicitly, though ignorantly, done, others may still do.

6. Another consequence is, custom hath great influence upon the human mind. It surely hath upon us. For, even after we have full evidence that sprinkling,
for

for baptism, is not from heaven, but was the offspring of error, and fostered by the dark ages of Papistical usurpation, we are hardly persuaded to renounce it. But, my brethren, my expectation is, that after you have searched your Bibles through and through, and find nothing of it there, you will give it up.

Should the Lord inquire of us, why we substitute sprinkling for baptizing, and say unto us, Whence is this substitution, from heaven, or of men? Would there not be great reasonings among us what answer to return? Should we say, From heaven; He might reply, How do you prove it? Should we say, Of men, then might he ask, Why do ye practise it?

7. Another consequence is, we have the same kind of evidence, and perhaps more of it, that baptism is to be administered by immersion, or dipping, or putting into water, than we have to support any other gospel precept, or practice. The evidence which we have, in either case, is the signification of the words which are used to point out the thing to be believed, or practised.

Were it not for the influence of habit, or custom, you would as readily and naturally conclude, from the very words used, that immersion, or dipping, or washing the body in water, was the meaning of baptism, as that a religious eating of bread, and drinking of wine, in commemoration of our dying Lord, was the way to observe the Lord's supper.

8. We appear to be brought to this dilemma: We must either embrace the tradition of the elders, for the rule of one part of our practice; or we must no more sprinkle, and call it baptism.

9. Another consequence is, Those, who first introduced sprinkling for baptizing, had no more right so to do,

than they had to institute a new rite, or ordinance, and call it Christ's.

What authority have we to follow their erroneous and hurtful practice?

10. We have another consequence worthy of consideration, and it is this: The Christian ordinance of baptism is a most solemn and significant ordinance, and of very high importance.

I speak not of the visible, or actual, administration of it, in particular; for I never saw it administered, as Christ hath delivered it to his people. But I refer to the purport, end and design of it. It is, among many other things, the great dividing line, which Heaven hath appointed to be drawn between the visible kingdom of Immanuel, and the men of this world. Doubtless there are a large number who belong to Christ's invisible kingdom, who are not, strictly speaking, or regularly, in his kingdom visibly, having not submitted to this ordinance, which is the great and important line of distinction.

11. It appears that we are, truly, in a trying state. We must depart, in one instance, from a long habit, or continue to do as we have done, and yet not be able to vindicate, by the scriptures of truth, our own conduct.

Lastly. We come, at length, to the answer of this old and difficult and perplexing question: Where, and when, did the religious sect, called Baptists, arise? The answer is, plainly, this. They arose in Judea, at the time when John came, preaching in the wilderness the baptism of repentance. I mention this consequence with considerable assurance, because the New Testament abundantly favours it, and no man is able to contradict me. Should any attempt it, he will fail for want of evidence. I should, not long since, have been gratified, could I have found

found their origin any where in the dark ages of Popery, or at the commencement of the reformation, among the famous enthusiasts of Germany, Holland, Switzerland, or Westphalia. But, after having long pursued the perplexing research, I found their *origin*, where I least of all expected it, in Enon and Jordan.

A few questions are now to close the present subject.

1. Is not immersion the scripture baptism?
2. Is sprinkling a mode of baptizing warranted by scripture? If so, where?
3. Are Old Testament rites to explain New Testament ordinances? Is Moses to correct what Christ hath left incomplete? Is it so?
4. Will Christ approve of that practice of men, which so changes his positive institution, as to lose, greatly to lose, the purport, end and design of it?
5. Was it ever right, and is it now, for men to change what Christ hath commanded to be in perpetual observation? Did the supposed *extreme cases* justify this change at first, and will trifling inconveniences justify us now?
6. Will it be wise and safe for us continually to forsake the commandment of Christ for the precepts of men?
7. Do you, my brethren, or can you, blame me for wishing you to keep the ordinances of Christ as he hath delivered them to the saints?
8. Should I have manifested myself your friend, or Christ's, if, after having found such a precious, new and old *treasure* in his word, as is the Christian ordinance of baptism, I had not ventured my life, or in other words, my reputation, my ease, my property, and my every worldly consideration, to bring it forth to your view and acceptance, that you might more fully walk

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in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless?

One request, my brethren, I pray you to grant me, and it is this : Search the scriptures devoutly, and follow me so far as I follow Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

BAPTISM.

SERMON VI.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I HAVE already observed to you, that Christ Jesus, the head of the church, and Lord of all, was now constituting his present and succeeding disciples to be apostles unto all nations. My text is their commission, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed—

I. To go and disciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, &c.

III. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment.

Lastly. For their encouragement and comfort, he adds,

adds, and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

What I purposed to say to you, particularly, upon the second proposition, I have said. I now recur to the

I. Which contains Christ's command to *his disciples* to go and *disciple* all nations.

I have already showed you what baptism is, and the design of it. I am now, if the Lord will, to lay open what is commanded to be done, before baptism be administered, also the evidence which the Lord may afford me to prove to you that my instruction is of him.

Your feelings, my brethren, and people, have no doubt been highly wrought up, whilst I have opened before you one of the laws of Christ's kingdom amongst men. I have still more things to say unto you, respecting the rules and regulations of this kingdom. I pray the Lord, that your minds may be so prepared to hear, that you may not forsake me, and flee, as many of Christ's professed friends did, when he preached on a subject which greatly crost their prejudices and carnal expectations.

Your busy minds, no doubt, will, before you are aware, be inquiring what great and good men, in our days and in the days of our fathers, have said and thought of these things; but we should look farther back than to our forefathers. The man Christ Jesus, and his inspired prophets and apostles, should be the men of our counsel. Should I speak according to these, you may hearken to me with safety: if contrary, convict me by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ; for I appeal to these, for by them I ought to be judged.

One request, my hearers, I pray you to grant me; namely—Lay prejudice aside, and let scripture, reason and common sense be heard for a few minutes.

Surely

Surely you must consider my case more trying than any of yours. For it is, perhaps, as difficult for me to combat my own prejudices and carnal feelings, as it is for any of you to contend with his: Besides this, I have to look your prejudices in the face, while I venture to bring any of your old practices to the scriptures for trial. Yes, more than all this, I have many trials to encounter, which you have not, nor can have.

I should not have made the attempt to bring our former practice to the standard for trial, had not my difficulties been so great, that I durst proceed no farther, without proving my works. One of my practices hath been weighed in the balance, and is found wanting. I am now, if my heart deceive me not, willing to lead another of my works, or the subjects on which some of my works have been, to the bar for trial. If this shall be found of wood, hay, or stubble, may the fire of truth burn it up, and may the fire of love cause me to rejoice while it shall be consuming.

The proposition which will bring this other of my works to the trial is—

Christ commands his ministers to go and disciple all nations. I have engaged to be one of these ministers. The command is, therefore, binding upon me. I have gone forth, that I might obey. The great thing to be determined is, whether I have understood what it is to disciple, or to make disciples, and have practised accordingly.

The important question to be decided is just this: If I disciple any of you, who are parents, do I, as a necessary consequence, disciple all your children and households?

The only difficulty, in this question, relates to children and households. What it is to disciple the master
of

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of a family, is a thing in which Christians generally agree.

I ought just to remark to you, that *mathetensate* to teach, is, in its literal and genuine sense, to disciple, or so to teach as to make disciples.

To bring the question before you as fully as I can, I wish you, each one of you, to fix his attention upon some one family in this town, in which family not a Christian is to be found. If each one have his mind fixt upon such a Christless household, I will now put the question :—

Suppose I, instrumentally, disciple the father of this family, do I, as a certain consequence, make disciples of the whole family ?

Before you determine the question, it may be well to fix in your minds what a disciple is. Let the scriptures speak. The *disciples* were called Christians first at Antioch : *Acts* xi. 26. The commission which Christ gave to the first ministers, and to all succeeding ones, as recorded *Mark* xvi. 15, 16, is, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature ; he that *believeth*, &c. Here a believer is the same as a *disciple*. Here we see, a disciple, in the sense of my text, is a believer, a believer in Christ, a Christian. This is the idea which the New Testament, from beginning to end, gives us of a disciple. There is, however, mention made of disciples, who were so but by profession, or who were visible disciples only ; not having the love of God in them.

Now try the question with respect to both sorts of these disciples.

Suppose I, instrumentally, disciple the father of a Christless family ; do I, as a necessary consequence, make Christians of all in his house ? You will please to make up your minds, on this question, decidedly.

Suppose,

Suppose, again, that I, instrumentally, disciple the father of a Christless family, do I, as a necessary consequence, make *visible* disciples of all his family? Let your minds be clearly determined as to the answer.

Once more, suppose I, by delivering the Lord's message, convert, or make a disciple of the father of a Christless family, do I, of necessary consequence, make any one of his household besides himself a disciple? *

Let scripture, let reason, let common sense, let any thing, speak, which will speak the truth, and determine these questions. Consider, take advice, and speak your minds.

Can you suppose, or can you not, that to make a father of a family a disciple, his wife, his servants, and his children, are all disciples of course, or of necessary consequence?

Is not this a clear case? and yet the great and momentous subject before us turns, altogether, upon the answer of this question.

If discipling the father of a family renders all his household disciples, they are all subjects of baptism, they have the scripture qualification for it; if it do not, then they have not the qualification which my text requires to be in those who are baptized.

You will judge for yourselves whether households do thus become disciples; as for the rest, the scriptures determine: if they be disciples, they are to be baptized; if not, they are not to be.

II

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* *Prejudice may reply, You are to disciple the household by baptizing them. This contradicts my text, that says, disciple them first.*

I know what your answer must be, for by incontestible facts, in this town, the discipling of a father of a family does not disciple his household; it does not even make them visible disciples, or give them even the appearance of being so.

The following is for evidence, that persons must be made disciples, before they are baptized.

1. John made his hearers disciples before he baptized them. He required, in order for baptism, that they should bring forth fruits meet for, or as evidence of, repentance: *Matt. iii. 8*, and *Luke iii. 8*.

2. Christ's disciples baptized none but such as were made disciples first: *John iv. 1, 2*.

3. Christ, in my text, gives no liberty to baptize any but such as are first disciplined. Yes, he commands his ministers to disciple before they baptize.

The account which Mark gives us of the Apostles' commission, and of the Baptismal Institution, is confirming evidence in this matter: xvith chapt. 15th and 16th verses: 'Preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth and is baptized,' &c. Here, believing is put before baptism. The way adopted by some to avoid the force of this text is, if they be baptized, say they, no matter when, before or after believing. This way of getting clear of the difficulty appears neither wise nor candid; for it injures the plain meaning of the text, and makes Matthew's and Mark's account of the commission to disagree.

What remains are a number of plain truths, facts and consequences, which have a more near or remote relation with the subject on hand, and may serve to throw light upon it.

In the FIRST place, we may take notice of two particulars, which, perhaps, have not been sufficiently noticed.

One

One is, the ceremonial law, and the covenant of circumcision which was annexed to it, appear to be disannulled and past away.

The following may make this matter plain: The disannulling or abolishing of the law, we see, *Heb. vii. 18.* "There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. Also, *Gal. iii. 19.* Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, *till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made.* What seed this is, to whom the promise was made, we are told in the 16th verse of the same chapter: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: He saith not to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." We hence see, that Christ was the seed to whom the promises were made, and that the *law* (the ceremonial law) was added because of transgressions, till the seed, i. e. Christ, should come. It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law was to continue no longer than till Christ came.

The covenant of circumcision appears to be annexed to this law. For says Jesus Christ, *John vii. 23,* If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me? &c.

That this covenant of circumcision, or the Sinai covenant, which includes it, hath passed away, or is disannulled, see *Heb. viii. 13.* 'In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old: now that, which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away.

Besides, circumcision is, evidently, a very important part of that law, which is disannulled, for saith Paul to the Galatians, chapter v. 2, 3, If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again, says he,

he, to every man that is *circumcised*, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law is no longer binding; and that the covenant of circumcision, which was incorporated with it, hath vanished away.

The other particular is this; the promises, which were made to Abraham and his seed, were not made to him in *circumcision*; but in *uncircumcision*; and the covenant which was confirmed of God, to Abraham, in Christ, was while he was in *uncircumcision*, and about twenty-four years before the *covenant* of *circumcision* was given. *Rom. iv. 8, 9, 10.*—*Gal. iii. 16, 17.*—*Gen. xii. 3, 4, 7, and xvii. 10, 17.*

Moreover, When Paul speaks of the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, he points out the exact year; when this was made known, or confirmed with Abraham, as though he had a foresight, as certainly the Holy Ghost had, of the contention which should be long continued, for want of judiciously understanding what covenant should be disannulled, and what covenant the law could not disannul. He tells us, *Gal. iii. 17*, That this covenant, which cannot be made void, was four hundred and thirty years before the law; whereas the covenant of circumcision was about four hundred and six years before the law, with which circumcision was united.

Seeing matters are thus, what, I pray you, my hearers, have we to do with the covenant of circumcision? If we keep it, Christ shall profit us nothing: if we observe something which we substitute in its place, Christ may profit us as little in such observance.

I know it will be asked, Is not the church the same now, that it was in Abraham's day? I answer, yes, and the same

same that it was in Noah's, Enoch's and Adam's, and the same that it ever will be. It will be asked again, is not the covenant the same, which it was in Abraham's time? Yes, the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ is unchangeably the same; but the covenant of circumcision, which God made with Abraham, renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and solemnized with Israel in the wilderness, (*Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12, 13*) is far from being the covenant, the *new covenant*; which God makes with the house of Israel in our day. The covenant of circumcision was, more than 1700 years ago, decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away. But you will again say, is not the church composed of parents and children, and of households, now, as it was in Abraham's day? Let Paul answer how it was (as touching the gospel) in Abraham's day and after. *Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8.* 'They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they that are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Just so now. The children of God, the children of the promise, are counted for the seed, and compose the church; and of those who appear thus should the visible church be made up, and of none else. But, if by the question be meant, Does not church membership descend from parents to children, and from masters to servants, as it appears to have done under the old covenant of circumcision? the *answer* is, The New Testament no where acknowledges, nor does it know, any thing about a church thus made up. I would that all good men would consent to take New Testament directions and examples by which to constitute and guide New Testament churches. But

But it will be asked once more, Hath not baptism come into the place of circumcision, and to be applied to similar subjects? *Answer.* Circumcision was a positive institution, and so is baptism. Abraham and the Israelites knew nothing to whom circumcision should be administered, but as they received direction from the Divine Institutor; just so it is with respect to the administration of baptism. The Christians at Antioch, the Elders at Jerusalem, the church of Galatia, and Paul and Barnabas, knew nothing of baptism being substituted for circumcision. *Acts* xv. 1, to 35; *Gal.* iii. and v. chapters. We know nothing, and can know nothing, as to whom baptism is to be administered, but from what Christ hath told us as to the subjects. Now—

Secondly, I ask what evidence have we from the bible that infants are to be baptized?

You may reply, they are included in the covenant. What covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not, for that hath vanished away. If you say, in the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ, I *answer*, it was not this covenant which entitled Abraham's household to circumcision, therefore, though your children be in this covenant, that does not, of itself, entitle them to baptism; whether baptism be in the place of circumcision, or not. You will then say, What can entitle our children to baptism? *Answer.* Their being disciples, and so coming within the compass, or pale, of the baptismal institution.

As we can know nothing of the subjects of baptism, any more than Abraham and Israel could of the subjects of circumcision, but from what we are informed in the institution, and in what is said upon it, we will inquire what the bible saith of this matter. If

If the Lord, in his word, hath not given us sufficient instruction upon this subject, we must practise in the dark, for we have no where else to go.

We will begin with John. 1. Did he baptize any children? We have no evidence that he did. Besides, he told the multitude, which attended his ministry, not to plead Abraham, or Abraham's covenant, as a title to baptism. *Matth. iii. 7, 8, 9, 10.*

2. Did Christ's disciples, whilst he was with them, and whilst they made and baptized more disciples than John, baptize infants, or any visibly unbelieving children? No evidence that they did.

3. Is there any evidence from any text, which contains the words of the institution, that infants, or unbelieving households, were to be baptized? None, but the contrary.

4. Is there any passage in the New Testament, which commands, or says so much as one word, that infants are to be baptized? Not one.

5. Is there any example, which shows, that the Apostles baptized any upon the faith of parents, or masters, or upon the faith, or promises, of any others?

I know, my brethren, there are three instances, which are supposed, by some, to favour the affirmative of the question. I have rather been of the same opinion. If it be so, may facts convince us.

We will look at each of these examples separately.

The first supposed example we find at Philippi. Here was a woman, named Lydia; she appears to have been a woman of business. She belonged to Thyatira, but was now at Philippi, probably selling her merchandize, with several attendants. The history is thus related, *Acts xvi. 13th, 14th and 15th verses.* "On the sabbath

sabbath day, we (Paul and other disciples) went out of the city, by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women who resorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her household she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there."

This is all we know of the matter. She belonged to another city. She worshipped God. She was, on the sabbath day, by the side of a river, where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened her heart to attend to what Paul said. Her servants were with her. She had a house, either her own, or one taken for the time. She was baptized, and her household. As to her having infants with her, you can tell, as well as I. Moreover, whether her servants believed the words of Paul, you can, if you attend to the circumstances, form as correct a judgment, perhaps, as any other can make up for you.

The things to be considered are, 1. Lydia was a godly woman. 2. She attended meeting. Paul found her where prayer was wont to be made, where religious women had been accustomed to meet. 3. She, like other religious people, took her household to meeting with her. 4. It appears that Paul baptized none of her household, but such as were with her at the female praying meeting. 5. The strong probability is, that Lydia, being a pious woman, one who worshipped God, would select, for her attendants, maidens or servants who also were worshippers of God. In verse 40; we are told,

told, the apostles entered into the house of Lydia, comforted the brethren, &c. You will weigh these circumstances, and make up for yourselves, so far as you can, a righteous judgment.

The next example is recorded in the same chapter, and appears to be in the same city. The history of the matter is contained in the 25th verse, and on to the 34th. The noticeable facts, and on which we must make up our judgment, are—The jailor says, Sirs, What must I do to be saved? Paul and Silas answered, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he was baptized, he and all his, straightway—and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Here are three things to be put together. 1. The word of the Lord Jesus was spoken to them all. 2. They were all baptized. 3. They all believed in God. Whether here be any example of infant baptism, you will judge, each one for himself.

As some have supposed that this passage, and a few others of similar import, afford an argument in favour of sprinkling, it may be well to give it a moment's consideration. Here we are told, that the keeper of the prison brought out Paul and Silas. Where he brought them to seems plainly enough to be gathered from the 3d verse, in which we find them speaking to the jailer the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. In the next verse we are informed that the jailer and all his were baptized. Where they were baptized, we are not told. One thing however is plain, it was not in the house, for in verse 34 it is said, When (i. e. after the household were baptized) he had brought them into his house,

house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house. From these observations, the following things appear :—

1. That Paul and Silas were in the jailer's house, when they spake the word of the Lord to all that were in his house. 2. That when the ordinance of baptism was administered, they were not in his house. 3. That the mode of baptizing then in use rendered it inconvenient to be performed in the jailer's house. 4. After the ordinance was administered, they went into the house. How this favours sprinkling I see not.

The other supposed example is in 1st Cor. i. 16, where Paul says, I baptized also the household of Stephanas. In the xvi. chap. 15th verse, we have a short history of Stephanas's household ; it is thus, " Ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that *they* have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Whether there is here found any evidence of infant baptism, you will determine for yourselves.

6. Are the encouragements which are given to parents, in behalf of their children, made to their having them baptized, or are the blessings connected with their dedicating them to the Lord, and with their bringing them up in his *nurture* and *admonition* ? With which, your Bibles will inform you.

7. Do we, or do any, pretend, that there is any certain evidence, from either precept or example, for the baptizing of infants ? Indeed there is none. Probably not many suppose it.

8. Is there, as some have affirmed, the same evidence for baptizing infants, that there is for observing the Lord's day, for admitting females to communion, and which there is for family prayer ?

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There is a day called the Lord's day, and religious things were to be observed on it. Are there infants, who are called baptized infants, and are they to be attended to as such?

Females and males are declared to be all one in Christ, and so fit subjects for the communion of saints. Are infants unequivocally declared to be fit subjects of baptism?

We have examples of family prayer, and are commanded to pray with all prayer. Are there scripture examples of infant baptism, and are we commanded to baptize all; and so are infants included?

9. Ought I to teach you infant baptism, if our Lord Jesus Christ hath no where directed me to do thus?

10. Hath Jesus Christ spoken one word of baptism, as being substituted for circumcision? Hath he any where commanded his ministers to teach this substitution?

Thirdly. Shall we go, and are we under the necessity of going, to the law and covenant of circumcision to prove infant baptism? when both this law and covenant have long since waxed old, been repealed, and have perished. *Heb. vii. 18, 19, and viii. 13.*

But you will ask, Are not the blessings of Abraham come on the Gentiles? *Ans.* Yes. You will then say, Are not our children included in the promise? *Answer.* If they be Christ's, then are they Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. *Gal. iii. 29.* Abraham's children, after the flesh, were not included in the promise, as the Pædobaptists of our day would have theirs. But you will say again, Are not our children included in the covenant? In what covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not. For though that covenant was often renewed,

newed, yet it hath long since passed away. Is your question this? Are they not included in that covenant, which was confirmed of God in Christ, twenty-four years previously to the covenant of circumcision? I answer, No man knoweth, nor can know, but as your children give evidence, that they possess the spirit of Christ. But as I have observed to you before, so I say again; even were your children included in this covenant, and saints; this does not of itself give them any right to baptism, any more, than Abraham's being included in the same covenant gave him a right to circumcision. This covenant determines nothing as to the one, or the other. The covenant of circumcision determined who were to be circumcised. So the ordinance or institution of Baptism, determines who are to be baptized. One determines no more who are to be admitted to the other, than does the covenant of an everlasting priesthood (*Numb. xxv. 13*) determine who shall be ministers in gospel days. In short, there is no arguing from one to the other in this matter. They are both of them positive institutions, and nothing can be known of either, but what is revealed in its particular institution.

While viewing this subject you will inquire, What will become of our children? I answer, God only knoweth. You may rejoin: But what shall we do for them? *Ans.* Dedicate them to God, and, like faithful Christians, bring them up for him.

Fourthly. We will now attend to some legitimate consequences which follow, upon supposition that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

1. One consequence is, every man who is converted to the Christian religion is to be baptized, and all his household,

household, though he may have three hundred and seventeen training soldiers born in his own house. Not only are these soldiers to be baptized, but their wives, children, and all other servants, who belong to this great man's house. A thousand infidels are to be baptized, because one great man, their master, is christianized.

2. These soldiers, with their wives, children and servants, are all to be considered and treated as church members, or as being in covenant. I confess this does not look to me gospel-like.

3. Another consequence is, the adults among these, and among all others, who are baptized, are not only to be admitted to the communion, but required to come. I ask, could such a communion be called the communion of saints?—one great and good man, with hundreds of unconverted servants.

4. All who have been baptized, and have not, for misdemeanor, been expelled the church, have a right to baptism for their children: and no man may forbid them.

5. Another consequence is, notwithstanding Christ saith, My kingdom is not of this world; yet the regulations were such, especially the mean of admission into it, as strongly, and of infallible consequence, tended to make it of this world, and that abundantly so.

6. Another consequence is, many learned and pious ministers of New-England are inconsistent with themselves, in requiring of persons baptized in infancy a profession of experimental religion, as a term of communion. It was not so done in Israel.

7. Another consequence is, many of the same pious and learned ministers are very inconsistent with themselves, in refusing baptism to the children of such as are; by their baptism, in regular church membership, or in covenant, as it is termed.

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I have taken, as you observe, for granted, what I do not believe to be true, that sprinkling, or a very partial washing, is baptism.

Lastly. Another consequence is, it doth, so far as it hath its *perfect work*, destroy the very idea of the gospel church, contradict the prophets, and make Paul, and others, speak not the truth, and it throws us back to the state of the Jewish church.

Jeremiah, prophesying of the gospel church, saith, chap. xxxi. 31 to 34, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with your fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt;—But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.

If this means any thing, it certainly means that the gospel church shall exceed in purity the Jewish church; that it shall, at least, be composed of professing saints. *Isaiah* says, chap. liv. 13, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. The latter of these passages, our Lord applies to the gospel day, *John*, vi. 45: The former is applied to the gospel church by Paul, *Heb.* viii. chap.

Moses says in Deut. xviii. 15, 19. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall heark-

en. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

This, and much more, Peter applies to gospel days, and to the gospel church, *Acts*, iii. 22, to the end. Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be *destroyed from among the people*. Yea, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you in *turning away every one of you from his iniquities*.

Through the New Testament, the gospel church is, or appears to be, spoken of as a society, nation or church of saints; and as being greatly different from the nation of the Jews. But the subjects of baptism being determined by the subjects of circumcision brings the gospel church as to its constituent materials, to the same condition with the church under the law of carnal ordinances. Indeed, what is now, generally, called the gospel church is hardly to be distinguished by its members from the old Jewish church.

Do not these things look as though the twelve hundred and sixty years of Antichrist's reign were not wholly past? Is there not, my brethren, some defiling error at the root of all this? Can such streams, as are these consequences,

sequences, flow from a pure fountain? Indeed many good ministers of our land have long since discovered some of these evil consequences, and have laboured hard to rectify them. President Edwards, and many others, made a noble stand against this flood of *corruption*; yet they discovered not the fountain, whence these streams flow, and will flow, till it be removed. Putting or mistaking the covenant of circumcision, for the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ to Abraham, twenty-four years before circumcision was known, and substituting baptism for circumcision, and determining the subjects of the one by the subjects of the other, without any authority thus to do, have produced all this corruption, deception, and world of evil. Would good ministers be persuaded to lay the axe at the root of the tree, as John did, the evils would be soon rectified.

The subject, on which we now are, is of such high concernment to the church of Christ, generally, and your conviction of the truth of it, being almost, or quite, essential to our future peace and union together, I would willingly omit nothing which might chase away your darkness, and cause the true light to appear. I will, therefore, add here the history of infant baptism. Should we find that infant baptism is of men, as we have already found sprinkling to be, it is hoped that you will either give it up, or practise it as being of man's device, and not, as Mr. Dickinson would have it, as belonging to infants by divine right.

The first information which we have of infant baptism is about the middle of the second century; about which time Irenæus, in one of his epistles, has the following sentence: "The church received a tradition from the
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the apostles to administer baptism to little children or infants."*

The next account we have of this matter (if we except Tertullian, who opposed the practice) is given us by Origen, in about the middle of the third century. His words are, "Little children are baptized for the remission of sins." For the remission of original sin, or pollution, for of this is he speaking. Again he says, "The church had an order from the apostles to give baptism to infants."

Another part of the history of infant baptism we have in a quotation from the decisions of the famous council at Carthage, in the year 253. It is this: "From baptism and the grace of God *none* ought to be *prohibited*; especially infants *need our help* and the divine mercy." We have a farther account from Augustine, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century. His words (writing of infant baptism) are, "Let none, therefore, so much as *whisper* any other doctrine in *your ears*: this the church hath always had, has always held."

The next we hear of infant baptism is, that the practice was confirmed, and so put beyond dispute, by Pope Innocent the First.

Now fire and sword were the all-conclusive arguments used for the conviction and reformation of all who refused to practise, or dared to call in question, infant baptism. We will pass over the horrid persecutions, which now began to be, and have ever since been practised, at intervals, upon those who would not submit to the divine right of infants to baptism, as conferred on them by the ghostly Popes of Rome.

Luther, the famous German reformer, says, "that infant

baptism was not determined till Pope Innocentius ;” and Grotius, in his annotations on *Matth. xix.* says, “it was not enjoined till the Council of Carthage.” *

We ought, however, to trace the history of infant baptism one step farther, and notice Calvin, and a multitude since, who were unwilling to acknowledge their dependence on the Mother of Harlots, for their authority in this matter ; and therefore with great ingenuity have discovered infant baptism, as a gospel ordinance, or the right of infants to it, in the law of Moses. Indeed they have supposed that this doctrine is implied in a number of passages of the New Testament. Yet, I believe, none who practise it, are willing to venture this New Testament ordinance upon New Testament evidence.

Here you see that *tradition* is the foundation of infant baptism; error, the belief that *baptism washes away original sin*, the nurse of its tender age ; the church of Rome, the confirmer and strong defender of it ; and the long since repealed, ceremonial law of Moses the evidence for it. You see, the introduction of infant baptism was tradition. Upon this foundation hath it manifestly rested ever since. All the ingenious arguments of learned and pious men, can, in fact, add no strength to its first foundation. The first we hear of it is, it was placed upon tradition, and there it hath rested, or been standing uneasily, ever since.

Besides; this *tradition*, as well as the practice which followed, is doubtless the offspring of error, and man’s invention. At best we have but one witness for it, in the mouth of whom nothing can be established. Origen says, “The church had an *order* from the Apostles.” Still we have but one witness. Moreover, the very expressions of the Pædobaptists show that they were from the beginning

ning opposed by the Baptists. Irenæus says, "We have a tradition." Origen says, "We have an order." The council of Carthage say, "Infants ought not to be *prohibited* from baptism." Augustine saith, "Let none so much as whisper any other doctrine in your ears."—Does not every syllable indicate the dispute which the Baptists had with the inventers and supporters of this anti-evangelical principle and practice?

It is worthy of a moment's consideration, that not one of the most ancient fathers makes the least pretension that infant baptism is supported by so much as one passage in either the Old Testament, or the New; and they mention no authority but *tradition*, and an *order* from the Apostles, &c. which, at best, are very uncertain things.

Whoever can fix their faith, continue their practice, and venture their responsibility, on such a traditionary foundation, I cannot. Upon this foundation for our practice, have both we and our fathers ventured to oppose the Baptists, with greater or less degrees of virulence; whilst, by our tradition, we have greatly injured the ordinance of Christ, if not, in this instance, made void the law of God.

In fine: Was not infant baptism first introduced to escape the offence of the cross? Is it not, with many, unknowingly continued for the same end? It bringeth the church to its former state as under the law. If I yet preach *circumcision*, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. Gal. v. 11.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

S E R M O N VII.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I HAVE already set before you the principal part of what I intended under the two first propositions in my text. What remains is to bring forward—

III. Christ's command to all his ministering servants to teach all nations, or those who should be discipled among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. And then—

Lastly, His comforting and strengthening promise, which is, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

To these propositions your serious, Christian attention is requested. The first is—

III. Christ's command to the ministers of his gospel to teach all nations, or those who should be discipled among;

among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

Here you see the extensiveness of my orders received, and which I must carefully observe, would I be obedient unto the Heavenly Teacher, who came from God.

Christ Jesus, when personally on earth, gave a new edition of his own and his Father's mind and will. In this new edition, he abrogated or left out, many ceremonies of the old, as being no longer useful. Under the old edition, the church was in its childhood, and therefore under such tutors and governors as were not needed in her riper years. In this new edition, Christ hath pointed out what is to be preserved of the old. The sum of the moral law, and the prophets, were to continue in force. These are, indeed, in the very nature of things, binding on accountable creatures. But when Christ, the anointed, and expected Messiah, was come, then all those rites, sacrifices and typical institutions of the ceremonial law, which were, together, as a school-master to lead the observer to Christ, were disannulled, being no longer of use.

You see what ministers have authority to teach, for both doctrine and practice. It is what Christ hath commanded them, and nothing which is contrary from it.

In time past I have taught you the precepts of Christ, somewhat largely. As I have taught them, so you have, as is believed, received them to the saving of your souls. The ordinance of the supper I have taught in its simplicity, and so have you received it. You have also been informed, that Jesus Christ appointed baptism, as an ordinance to be observed in his church. But what that ordinance was, and who were the subjects of it, you have

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all of you, possess such a ready mind, as to give up your long, and almost inveterate, prejudices, and receive the light, at once. It is by little and little, that anti-christian errors must be destroyed from the church, and from your hearts, as well as from mine.

You may expect to find me ready, at any time, and at all times, to afford you every instruction, and to answer any objection which may occur to your candid minds.

You should have your bibles always nigh you, and possess, continually a prayerful, teachable spirit. Be determined to hearken to none but Christ, and to be obedient to all his commands.

Be careful to avoid all bitterness and evil speaking. Wisdom will not dwell with strife; nor will the wrath of man work the righteousness of God.

2. It belongs to me to teach you to observe the ordinance of baptism, and the proper subjects, in your practice. You must understand these things before you can acceptably practise them. Some of you, no doubt, sufficiently understand them to proceed to practice. But I have not thought it duty to hasten your practice, or to lead you by example, lest the minds of others should be injured. It is a time to weaken prejudices, and not to increase them. Wisdom dwells with prudence. Many of your minds, as well as mine, are, with pleasing expectation, looking forward to the time, when we may, with nighly, or quite, all our brethren with us, keep all the ordinances of the gospel, as Christ hath commanded us.

When you shall understand these things, happy will you be if you practise them: for all gospel obedience gives pleasure in the practice.

As Moses had much to do in Egypt, before God said unto him, 'Speak unto the people that they go forward,'

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not been particularly told, till of late. Nor had I, till a short time since, a clear understanding of either. I, no doubt, ought to have known them before, but till I did, I could not teach them to you. When I came to the knowledge of them, it was no longer in my power to be faithful to Christ, and refuse to teach them. In the simplicity of my heart have I taught you what is baptism, and who are to be baptized.

Whether these things be, or be not, agreeable to my former notions of them, is nothing to the point. One thing I am settled in, I have, of late, taught them to you, as Christ hath commanded me.

Not only was it my duty to teach you these things, but I am commanded to teach you to observe them: for then are you Christ's disciples, when you do all things whatsoever he hath commanded you.

To observe these things, is like obedient children to receive instruction, and then to search the scriptures, that you may know how these things are. It belongs to me to teach you—

1. To observe these things till you understand them. and then—

2. To observe them in your practice.

1. Would you walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless, you must observe these things till you understand them.

You and I have been unreasonably prejudiced against light and truth in these matters. If I do not misjudge, the Lord hath, in answer to prayer, afforded me the needed light and knowledge upon the subject. It was not in a day, nor in a month, after my prejudices received a shock, and my mind partial conviction, that I obtained satisfaction. Nor can I expect that you will,

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all of you, possess such a ready mind, as to give up your long, and almost inveterate, prejudices, and receive the light, at once. It is by little and little, that anti-christian errors must be destroyed from the church, and from your hearts, as well as from mine.

You may expect to find me ready, at any time, and at all times, to afford you every instruction, and to answer any objection which may occur to your candid minds. You should have your bibles always nigh you, and possess, continually a prayerful, teachable spirit. Be determined to hearken to none but Christ, and to be obedient to all his commands.

Be careful to avoid all bitterness and evil speaking. Wisdom will not dwell with strife; nor will the wrath of man work the righteousness of God.

2. It belongs to me to teach you to observe the ordinance of baptism, and the proper subjects, in your practice. You must understand these things before you can acceptably practise them. Some of you, no doubt, sufficiently understand them to proceed to practice. But I have not thought it duty to hasten your practice, or to lead you by example, lest the minds of others should be injured. It is a time to weaken prejudices, and not to increase them. Wisdom dwells with prudence. Many of your minds, as well as mine, are, with pleasing expectation, looking forward to the time, when we may, with nighly, or quite, all our brethren with us, keep all the ordinances of the gospel, as Christ hath commanded us.

When you shall understand these things, happy will you be if you practise them: for all gospel obedience gives pleasure in the practice.

As Moses had much to do in Egypt, before God said unto him, 'Speak unto the people that they go forward,'

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so, my brethren, I may have much to do before things shall be in readiness, and before the Lord shall bid me speak, saying unto you, *Go FORWARD*. But, if the Lord will, I would live to see that day.

After Israel went forward, and were baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea, they had a tedious wilderness to pass; so it may be with us. But, should we observe the pillar of cloud and of fire, we shall come to the promised land; and, it may be, with much safety and speed, should we hearken to the good counsel of Joshua.

You know, my brethren, as it is my duty to teach you to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded me, so it is your duty to receive instruction, and be obedient. Your obedience is not to be rendered to me, but to Jesus Christ, and to the word of his testimony.

It will doubtless occur to your minds, Whom shall we hear? One minister teaches us one thing, and another teaches us differently. You are to hear no man any farther than he shall teach you as the man Christ Jesus hath commanded him. Ministers have no authority, any farther than they receive it from him. He hath given them no power to teach, but what He hath commanded. When they transcribe out of the old into the new edition of God's word and will, and tell us that the rite and covenant of circumcision are to explain to us the observance of a New Testament ordinance, we are not obliged to believe them, unless they point us to the place where Christ hath so commanded. You are to obey them who have the rule over you. But even Paul was not to be followed any farther than he followed Christ. So it ought to be with you, in hearkening to what your teachers say. Ministers are but men, and they have
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proved themselves to be so, by changing the ordinance of baptism into quite a different thing, and by administering their new rite to subjects to whom Jesus Christ never commanded it. It surely is a surprising thing, and not to be accounted for, but from the relics of human depravity, that so many good men should, unknowingly, do and teach things which are quite aside from what Christ hath commanded them.

It is too late for you, my hearers, to cloak yourselves under what great and good men have said; for the truth of the Lord hath already been told you. Had I not come and spoken to you this word of Christ, you would not have had sin; but now have you no cloak for disobedience.

We now come—

Lastly, To consider Christ's comforting and strengthening promise to his ministering servants: which is, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Christ Jesus hath been with his ministers; and he will be—

1. In preparing them for their office. He was personally with his first gospel heralds, for the space of three years, or more; after this he left them for a short space; in this short interval they passed a severe trial. He was with them again, at times, for forty days. Soon after this he sent his Spirit upon them, and filled them with it to a remarkable degree. Then they were prepared for their office. They speedily filled it remarkably, and the effect was wonderful. Three thousand were converted in a day:

Christ is as really, though not so apparently, with all his gospel messengers in preparing them to go forth into his harvest. Those, who have not Christ with them,

to prepare them for their office, are but as wolves in sheep's clothing, when they go forth into the ministry. They preach for *filthy lucre*, and frequently have their *reward*. It is too often the case, that those, whom Christ hath prepared, are obliged to go into the field, or make tents for their support, whilst such as run, not being sent, swim in luxury.

2. Jesus Christ will be with his ministers in bringing divine things to their remembrance.

It is the Lord's Spirit which causeth divine truth to occur to the minds of his servants. Truths, which have been forgotten for months, and it may be for years, or passages which before were not understood, may be, and not unfrequently are, fresh and plain in the minds of his servants, for their comfort, or for the comfort and instruction of others, or for the comfort and edification of both.

3. Christ will be with his ministers in affording them wisdom, fortitude and faithfulness.

The entrance of his word giveth light. He maketh light their paths, and ordereth all their steps. He maketh their feet like hinds' feet, and causeth them to be swifter than the eagle, stronger than lions, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. With what wisdom did Stephen speak! With what fortitude did Peter, Paul, and a thousand others, address their auditories! With what wisdom hath he made his servants to speak! With what fortitude to bear, with what faithfulness to endure, for his name's sake! How remarkably hath it been thus, in times of persecution! and when will you find a time, when they that are born after the flesh do not persecute those who are born after the Spirit? How often is it the case, when ministers, like Paul, wax bold, and testify that Jesus

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is the Christ, and what are his word and institutions, that they are persecuted, openly or more secretly !

4. Christ is and will be with his ministering servants, whilst they are reproached and suffering for his name and truth sake.

He says to them all, If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. When Christ's ministers are reviled and suffer for his sake, his truth and Spirit bear their spirits up. He gives them to believe and know, that though they weep now, they shall soon rejoice ; that their light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are preparing them for, and working out for them, a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

5. Christ Jesus will be with his faithful ministers in giving them to see their desire upon his enemies.

This appears to be particularly implied in my text. They are commanded to go and disciple all nations. Their desire is to see disciples multiplied. They go forth, Christ goes forth with them. Many of Christ's enemies submit to his yoke, which is easy, and to his burden, which is light. In this are they gratified, and their desire on them is accomplished.

6. Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending his truth.

How did Peter, Paul and others, in the first ages of Christianity, explain and vindicate the truth, to the confounding of both Jews and Gentiles ! Whenever, in ages since, he hath spoken the word, great hath been the company, or force, of those who have published, explained and defended it. Martin Luther, John Calvin, and a number more in the reformation, were like flames of fire : nothing could stop them from publishing, explaining

ing and defending the truths of the Saviour, for he was with them.

You will ask, How is it that Christ is with his ministers, when they contradict one the other, and themselves too? *Answer.* It is not said, that Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending error. Error is human; truth is divine. When ministers undertake to support error, they go without Christ's blessing and presence in this their labour. Hence it is that they are so contradictory and inconsistent; and are obliged to wrest the scriptures from their plain and easy sense, to support a beloved prejudice. But when they take up for truth, plain scripture supports them, and they have plain and pleasant work, and their subjects supported with ease, as you have seen whilst attending to the several truths in my text.

Besides, it may be the case, that some very good men may mix truth and error, the commands of God and their own traditions, together; and, whilst practising accordingly, they may enjoy a comfortable frame of mind, and hence conclude that their beloved compound is all from heaven. This may be illustrated by the following example. Mr. S. finds it to be a truth, that his infant offspring, as well as every thing else, should be devoutly given to God. He hath received and holds a tradition from the fathers, that his infants should be baptized. He publicly gives them to the Lord, and solemnly promises to instruct them in the way of truth and duty. He, at the same time, hath the ordinance of baptism administered to them, or administers it himself. During the whole transaction he possesses much comfort in his mind. His consequence is, the whole matter is according to truth, just as God would have it. Is not
this

this going a little too much by sense, and not quite enough by scripture? Does it not contain a *spice* of enthusiasm? Would not the good man have had the same mental satisfaction, had he possessed the same spirituality, and yet had omitted that part which is enjoined by tradition only?

Lastly: The Great Captain of salvation is with his ministers, to teach, lead and comfort them, in all their trials, in all their straits. Whosoever will leave them, he will not. Though he, the Great High Priest of our profession, when suffering for his people's sins, was left alone—all forsook him; yet, whenever his friends are afflicted, he kindly calls, saying, Lo, I am with you. This hath been the stay of good men in all ages, in all circumstances. Those who have wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, who have been afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, have found their refuge here. There is nothing like this to support the feeble, distressed soul. When godly ministers have been obliged to leave their people, yes, and their families, and sometimes their native country, for the truth sake, this hath sustained them—Christ was with them. President Edwards, for a noble attempt at partial reformation, was constrained to flee his beloved charge: but Christ was, no doubt, with him. Should I, for laying the axe at the root of the tree, be obliged to leave you, though, for the present, I see no particular reason to apprehend such an event, yet I trust this will be my hiding place—Jesus, who will be with me.

APPLICATION.

FROM what hath been said in the preceding discourses, it appears—

K 2

1. That

1. That the two sides of the controversy between the Baptists and the Pædobaptists stand thus.

Before I state the two sides of the controversy, it is but reasonable that I define those whom it respects. By the Baptists, on one side, I mean the regular Calvinistic Baptists. By the Pædobaptists, on the other, I now intend the Calvinistic Congregationalists among them. I give this definition, that I may be clearly understood.

You see both sides are Calvinists, that is, they are agreed in what are styled the doctrines of grace. They are both of the congregational order, as it respects the government of the churches.

Now for the controversy, and it is this : The Baptists hold immersion only to be baptism. The Pædobaptists hold that sprinkling may be substituted for immersion, and may answer just as well.

The Baptists hold that the scriptures know nothing of a Christian ordinance of baptism for unbelievers and infidels. The Pædobaptists hold that, if a great man, who hath a thousand slaves, should become a disciple, then all his household are to be counted disciples, and are to be baptized.

The Baptists hold that the church of the New Testament is composed of visible or professed saints. The consistent Pædobaptists hold, that this great man, his thousand slaves, together with his wife and children, all belong to the gospel church, though he only be a believer in Christ.

The Baptists hold that none have a right to partake of the Lord's supper, but those who are his friends. The consistent Pædobaptists hold, that all the adults in this great man's household, if they be not guilty of gross immorality, have a right to come.

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The Baptists plead New Testament authority for the defence of their principles and practice, where they differ from their brethren of the Pædobaptists. The Pædobaptists in support of their sentiments plead convenience, and the covenant and rite of circumcision, which were decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away, more than 1700 years ago.

The Baptists bring nighly threescore texts of scripture, which are plainly and fully to their point in favour of immersion. The Pædobaptists mention three or four texts, which, at most, are but very doubtfully in their favour; and, when rightly understood, appear fully against them.

What advantage, my brethren, have the Pædobaptists over the Baptists? and with what crime, or error, in this matter, do they stand convicted?

2. It appears that gospel ministers have no authority to teach Christians, that their children and servants should be baptized, because Abraham's were circumcised.

Christ hath nowhere commanded them to teach thus. Christ hath nowhere commanded them to teach infant baptism at all, or baptism upon the faith another: much less, that they are to be baptized because Abraham's were circumcised.

3. It appears, that many of the pious and learned clergy of New England have made some noble and promising advances towards truth in this matter; yet in this they are inconsistent with themselves.

They will receive none to the communion but such as profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as repentance for sin: and they will administer baptism to the children of no other. Here, in two instances, they refuse to follow the law of circumcision. One, in refusing to admit

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admit to the supper impenitent, though civil, baptized persons; the other, in not admitting to baptism the children of all those who have been baptized. This is consistent with truth so far as it goes; but inconsistent with the notion that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

These good men, so long as they possess their present light, must come over to the true Baptist ground, or submit to the imputation of inconsistency. I wish them to come over. For myself, I expect to, though my carnal nature hates the name of a Baptist, as much as theirs does. But my better judgment tells me, that the Baptists are on the gospel ground.

4. It is a matter of lamentation, that pious and learned ministers have not a little more self-denial: than they might be consistent with themselves and with truth too. Could I be with them, and ask them this plain question, Do you not find a little backwardness from searching critically into the primitive meaning and practice of baptism? I fear they would answer with some reluctance.

To me, I confess, it appears an hard case, that the Baptists should suffer so much reproach, merely on account of their sentiments, when many of our best old divines have given them the ground, and confess, that their sentiments, as to the mode, are from heaven, and ours from convenience. Our opposition to them, on account of the subjects, appears but little better, being but poorly supported by scripture: they having the plain word, and full current of all the prophets from Moses to Malachi, so far as they have spoken of the gospel church, together with the New Testament, in *their* favour; whilst for us, in this particular,

lar, nothing better can be alledged, than the antiquated rite of circumcision. If the Baptists be right, why not join them, and suffer small inconveniences? If wrong, why not, prove them so? It is pitiful that great and good men should be dallying with inconclusive arguments, when the time is long since come, that the *high-way* of holiness should be so *plain*, that *wayfaring men*, though fools, should not err therein.

5. We see why good men have been so divided among themselves, as to infant baptism.

The reason is, they go without Christ, in this matter. He is not divided.

Some baptize all. Others will baptize only the children in the households of communicants. Some baptize upon the half-way covenant. Some will baptize all who are under age. Again, others will baptize all under seven. Others still will baptize upon the good promises of godfathers and godmothers. You will observe I use the word baptize in a sense which I believe to be improper, but I would not offend you with a word, when my meaning may be understood. But what propriety is there in all this inconsistency about the subjects of baptism! Does not the matter look as though there were no rule to go by, or as though none understood what it was!

6. We see why good men, when writing or speaking of baptism, are left to speak untruths.

It is doubtless because they will follow their own prejudices, and not the truth. Error hath divided them, and Christ is not with them in what they say. Some good men, not many, dare assert, in opposition to the Baptists, that there is not a word about immersion for baptism, in all the Bible. For *laymen* to say thus is *presumption*.

sumption, and for men of *learning* to make the assertion, is *almost unpardonable*. For they know, or ought to know, that the word, to baptize, is not once mentioned in all the Bible but immersion is mentioned, unless they mean to play upon the word; and then it is a truth, when *baptizō* is mentioned, immersion is, if they will give it its plain, literal English.

If the Baptists have the plain, literal and unequivocal sense of the scripture, in their favour, is it not enough, that they are despised and persecuted, by the wicked of every class, and not helped by any; but, must we add to their affliction, by falsehood, or equivocation! O prejudice, what wilt thou not do, even in a saint!

Besides, our good brethren, who are so warm against the Baptists, and will not allow them a word for their mode, do not agree together to inform us what the mode should be. One tells us, it is sprinkling, another says, pouring is the mode, a third contends for washing the face, a fourth is for putting water on the back of the neck, as the Swiss are said to do; whilst others affirm, that all these are right. Now, suppose the Baptists are wrong, who shall we say are in the right, or is there no right in this business? Does not all this look just as it would were there an error at the bottom? Hath the Great Teacher, who came from God, left matters thus, at loose ends? Does the Bible thus differ, whilst pointing out the mode? No. Its language is pure and determinate.

7. It appears, that, in infant sprinkling for baptism, the intent of the institution is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

Both the thing itself and the subjects of it are changed. It is quite a different thing from what the Institutor.

tor hath appointed. Neither this mode, nor these subjects, are known in the institution, nor in any passage of the Bible, where baptism is mentioned. This mode is of man's device, and the subjects of it have, at best, but a traditional right. For good men to do thus, whilst they think it consistent with truth, appears to be a sin of ignorance; but, if any do thus, while they know what the scriptures enjoin, their practice deserves a harder name.

8. It appears that dipping, immersion, or burying, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is baptism.

No man of real piety, and solid learning, ever doubted it. Whereas, sprinkling hath been doubted by many, denied, continually, by a large class of Christians, and been proved by none to have been ever appointed as the Christian ordinance of baptism.

9. We see, that every plea which hath been made, for a general, or partial neglect of the scripture mode of baptism, is an indirect, though unintentional, charge of negligence, or want of benevolence, or of foresight, in the Divine Institutor. Let every man of candour and common sense examine this matter. Did not the Lord, who made our northern climes, know how cold they are?—Did he know them to be too cold for his disciples who might live in them, to be separated from the world by being visibly buried and raised again to join his kingdom? Why then did he not mention an exception in our favour? and not leave us to suffer this inconvenience, or be in perpetual uncertainty, and continual dispute, to defend our, at best, but doubtful practice? Did he not perfectly know all the *compelling necessities*, which Cyprian and others would, in their erring judgments, find to break
over

over the bounds of the baptismal institution? Why then did he make no provision for these extreme cases? By doing thus, he would have saved the Pædobaptists a world of anxiety, contention and censure. The fact appears to be, that our Lord intended, that the way of admission into his kingdom should be uniform, and that those, who would not submit to it, should suffer the inconvenience of darkness, error and strife.

10. From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, is not the following a fair and undeniable conclusion? That I and other Pædobaptist ministers, so far as we have spoken a word against the Baptists, and especially that those, who have publicly warned their people to avoid the Baptists and flee from them, as from a dividing and dangerous heresy, have in this matter acted the part of the old scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites—who would not go into the kingdom of God themselves, and those who were entering, they hindered.

I by no means suppose that all who have done thus, are indeed hypocrites, save in this particular. No reasonable doubt can be entertained, but many of them are learned, pious and very useful men; men, whom the Lord hath greatly honoured as labourers, in gathering in the harvest of souls. Many of these have been, in measure, bold, zealous and faithful, like Peter; yet when they dissemble, or teach and practise contrary from the truth, they are to be blamed, yes, they are, in this instance, worthy to be rebuked.

It would, indeed, be very injudicious in me to contend, that all which the Baptists have said and done is justifiable. It would be equally injudicious to justify myself, or my brethren, where we have both said and done things contrary from the church and name of Jesus
of

of Nazareth. It is time for both ministers and people to look to this matter, lest the Lord send leanness into our souls.

11. From a review of the whole subject, the following inference appears natural, and at the same time worthy of much consideration. The divinely constituted method by which any of the fallen race are to enter the kingdom of heaven below, remarkably sets to our view the way by which we are to commence perfect members of the kingdom of heaven above. Our obedience to the former is a practical declaration of our faith in the latter.

In joining Christ's kingdom on earth, we professedly die unto sin, go down to the grave, are buried, and rise, as from the dead. To join the kingdom of glory, we must actually experience what is but shadowed forth in baptism. We must die, be buried, or return to the dust, and rise from the dead.

How exactly doth our entrance into the church militant shadow forth our hoped for entrance into the church triumphant! It also appears that Christ hath directed, that the subjects of the one should be professedly, what the subjects of the other shall be actually, all saints.

How beautiful doth the church appear, so far as she observes the commands of her Lord, as to the members which she admits, and the manner of receiving them! She thus resembles Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, if we be Christians. May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of the truth.

In the conclusion of the whole, it becomes us to add, to the truths delivered, what Christ Jesus added to my text: AMEN.



A MINIATURE HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS.

IT may be pleasing to some of my readers to be presented with a brief account of the Baptists. I shall extract this account from the writings of those who were not of the Baptists' denomination, but rather prejudiced against them.

Here it may be observed, that the religious sect, called Baptists, have caused the learned world more perplexity and research to decypher their origin, than any other sect of Christians, or, perhaps, than all others. Yes, this research hath baffled all their erudition in ancient story.

It is not difficult to fix the period when one sect of this denomination was first called Petrobrusians, when another was known by the name of Waterlandians, when a third was denominated Mennonites, &c. But the difficulty is this, to ascertain the time, place and medium, by which Christ's disciples were led to adopt the peculiar sentiment, which is now held by those called Baptists, and which distinguishes them from all other denominations.

It may be farther observed, that if no one, however learned and wise, be able to trace this sect to any beginning short of the days of the apostles, or of Christ, it is possible that it then arose. Besides, if all other religious denominations, or the Pædobaptists, who include all which are not Baptists, can be traced to a probable origin
short

short of the apostles, and the Baptists cannot be, it affords still more probability, that they might have arisen then.

I wish my readers to indulge me one question, and to give me an explicit answer. Are you willing to have the origin of the Baptists fairly explored, and to open your eyes to the light, should light be afforded?

You cannot, my Christian readers, unless your minds be unduly swayed by prejudice, do otherwise than say Yes. For, though you be not very friendly to the Baptists, you will not deny them what you grant to your worst enemy, liberty to speak the truth, and that truth its weight, at least in measure.

It ought to be particularly noted, that my object is not to give the history of a name, but of a principle. I shall not contend who were first called Baptists, Anabaptists, Mennonites, or the like; but who have held the peculiar sentiment which is adopted by those who are called Baptists. Wherever we find this principle, there we find the men, the Christians, who, had they lived in our day, would be styled Baptists. Nor is the present controversy this, whence came that *mode* of baptism, which is practised by all, who are known by the name Baptists. For this mode is granted, generally, if not universally, by all learned and honest men, to be as ancient as John the Baptist and the apostles. This mode is, indeed, not peculiar to the Baptists, for the Pædobaptists, for many centuries, practised this mode; and many of them do, to this day, practise immersion.

The peculiar characteristic of the Baptists is this: They hold, that the ordinance of baptism is to be administered to adults, or to visible believers only.

One natural consequence of this principle is, when any
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one who was baptized, or sprinkled, in his infancy, comes over to the Baptists' sentiment, they require him to be baptized. Hence they are called Anabaptists. Another very natural consequence is, this sentiment constrains the Baptists to oppose the baptism of infants. Hence they are distinguished by the name of Antipædobaptists.

I shall add one observation more, and then proceed to give you a succinct history of the Baptists. The observation is this : Whenever and wherever I find persons, who hold the peculiar, characteristic, sentiment of the Baptists, I shall call them by that name. Their history now follows.

I. The origin of the Baptists can be found nowhere, unless it be conceded, that it was at Jordan, or Enon.

Dr. Mosheim, in his history of the Baptists, says, "The *true origin* of that sect, which acquired the denomination of the Anabaptists by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who come over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is *hid* in the *remote depths* of *antiquity*, and is of consequence extremely difficult to be ascertained."

Here, Dr. Mosheim, as learned an historian, though not so candid a one, as the science of letters can boast, bears positive testimony, that the origin of the Baptists is hidden in the *remote depths* of *antiquity*. Nothing is more evident than this ; the Dr. either knew not their origin, or was not candid enough to confess it. At least, we have this conclusion, that he could find their origin nowhere short of the apostles.

II. A large number of the Baptists were scattered, oppressed, and persecuted, through many, if not through all, the nations of Europe, before the dawn of the reformation.

mation under Luther and Calvin. When Luther, seconded by several princes of the petty states of Germany, arose in opposition to the overgrown usurpations of the church of Rome, the Baptists also arose from their hiding places. They hoped that what they had been long expecting and praying for was now at the door: the time in which the sufferings of God's people should be greatly terminated: but God had not raised Luther's views of reformation to nigh the height the Baptists were expecting. Their detestation of the Mother of Harlots, owing to their bitter experience of her cruelties, and the clear gospel light with which they had been favoured above Luther, and their ardent desire to be utterly delivered from her cruel oppressions, made them wish to carry the reformation farther than God had appointed Luther to accomplish. They were soon disappointed in Luther, and probably did not duly appreciate the reformation which he was instrumentally effecting. It was as might have been expected; the Lutherans and the Baptists fell out by the way; and Calvin, if not Luther, warmly opposed them. See *Mosheim, Gent. XVI. Chap. iii. Sect. 3, Part 2.*

Mosheim, vol. IV. page 427, speaking of the Baptists, says, "This sect started up all of a sudden, in several countries, at the same point of time, and at the very period when the first contests of the reformers with the Roman Pontiffs drew the attention of the world." From this we have one plain and fair deduction; that the Baptists were before the reformation under Luther and Calvin, and therefore did not take their rise from the Enthusiasts under Münzer and Storck, or at that time; or at Munster.

III. The Hussites, in the fifteenth century, the Wickliffites,

Hussites, in the fourteenth, and the Petrobrusians, in the twelfth, and the Waldenses, were all Baptists. To this fact Dr. Mosheim bears the following testimony.* “It may be observed that the Mennonites (i. e. the Baptists of East and West Friesland, Holland, Gelderland, Brabant, Westphalia and other places in the North of Europe) are *not entirely mistaken*, when they boast their descent from the Waldenses, Petrobrusians and other *ancient* sects, who are usually considered as *witnesses* of the truth in times of universal darkness and superstition. Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay *concealed* in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many persons, who adhered tenaciously to the following doctrine, which the Waldenses, Wickliffites and Hussites had maintained; some in a more disguised and others in a more open and public manner, viz. *That the kingdom of Christ, or the visible church, he had established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also exempt from all those institutions which human prudence suggests to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors.* This maxim is the true source of all the peculiarities, that are to be found in the religious doctrine and discipline of the Mennonites, (or Baptists in the North of Europe) and it is most certain that the *greatest part* of these peculiarities were approved of by many of those who, before the dawn of the reformation, entertained the notion already mentioned relating to the visible church of Christ.”

From this testimony of Dr. Mosheim we may remark—

1. That the Mennonites were Baptists, or Anabaptists,

* Vol. IV. pp. 428, 429.

tists, for these different names he uses to express one and the same thing.

2. That the Petrobrusians were Baptists; for the Baptists assert, and Mosheim allows it, that they were their progenitors in principle and practice. Besides, in his history of the twelfth century, part II. chap. v. sect. 7, he expressly tells us, that one of their tenets was, *that no persons whatsoever were to be baptized before they were come to the full use of their reason.*

3. That the Waldenses, Wickliffites and Hussites were Baptists; for as Mosheim says, they all held to the great and leading maxim which is the true source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and discipline of the Mennonites. These several denominations of Christians were not known by the ancient, modern and appropriate name, Baptists. But their doctrine and discipline were the same with our Baptists, and were they now living, they would be thus called. In other words; just so far as they were consistent with their great and leading *maxim*, and just so far as the modern Baptists are consistent with *their* great and leading maxim, just so far these ancient and modern Baptists are alike the one to the other.

4. That in the sixteenth century the Waldenses, Petrobrusians and other ancient sects (i. e. of the Baptists) were usually considered as having been witnesses of the truth, in the times of darkness and universal superstition. How differently from this would and do many consider them in our day!

5. That before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many persons who held the same doctrine and discipline with the Baptists in our day, and were, of necessity

cessary and fair consequence, of the same denomination.

IV. We have already traced the Baptists down to the twelfth century. We have also found that they were scattered over almost all the countries of Europe, and were, in the dark ages of popery, the witnesses of the truth: or have been usually thus considered. Besides, we have found that the Waldenses were, in principle and practice, Baptists; or in other words, we have found that the Waldenses were Baptists. We will now see to what origin we can trace the Waldenses.

Dr. Maclaine, who translated Mosheim's church history from the original Latin, gives us, vol. III. pages 118, 119, under note, G, the following history of the Waldenses. His words are, "We may venture to affirm the contrary (i. e. from what Mosheim had just said of the Waldenses taking their name from Peter Waldus) with Beza and other writers of note; for it seems evident, from the best records, that Valdus derived his name from the true Valdenses of Piedmont, whose doctrine he adopted, and who were known by the names of Vaudois and Valdenses, before he, or his immediate followers, existed. If the Valdenses, or Waldenses, had derived their name from any eminent teacher, it would probably have been from Valdo, who was remarkable for the purity of his doctrine, in the ninth century, and was the cotemporary and chief counsellor of Berengarius. But the truth is, that they derive their name from their vallies in Piedmont, which in their language are called Vaux. Hence Vaudois, their true name: Hence Peter, (or as others call him John) of Lyons, was called in Latin Valdus, because he had adopted their doctrine; and hence the term Valdenses and

and Waldenses, used by those who write in English, or Latin, in the place of Vaudois. The bloody Inquisitor Reinerus Sacco, who exerted such a furious zeal for the destruction of the Waldenses, lived but about eighty years after Valdis of Lyons, and must therefore be supposed to know whether or not he was the real founder of the Waldenses, or Leonists; and yet it is remarkable, that he speaks of the Leonists as a sect that had flourished about five hundred years; nay, mentions authors of note, who make their antiquity remount to the apostolic age. See the account given of Sacco's book by the Jesuit Gretser in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*. I know not upon what principle Dr. Mosheim maintains that the inhabitants of the vallies of Piedmont are to be carefully distinguished from the Waldenses, and I am persuaded that whoever will be at the pains to read attentively the 2d, 25th, 26th, and 27th chapters of the first book of Leger's *Histoire des Eglises Vaudoises*, will find this distinction entirely groundless.—When the Papists ask us where our religion was before Luther, we generally answer, in the Bible, and we answer well. But to gratify their taste for tradition, and human authority, we may add to this answer—and in the vallies of Piedmont.

To the above we may add, one of the Popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, "*The heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world.*"*

It is here worthy to be particularly noticed.

1. That Reinerus Sacco speaks of the Waldenses, or Baptists, of his day, as a sect that had, at that time, flourished for about five hundred years; which brings the history of the Baptists, as a religious sect, down to the fifth century.

2. That

* *President Edwards's Hist. of Redemption*, p. 267.

2. That this same Reinerus Sacco mentions authors of note, who make the antiquity of the Waldensean Baptists to remount to the apostolic age.

3. That the Baptists are the most ancient of all the religious sects, who have set themselves to oppose the ghostly powers of the Romanists.

4. That, if there be any body of Christians, who have existed during the reign of antichrist, or of the man of sin, the Baptists have been this living church of Jesus Christ.

5. The consequence of the whole is this : The Baptists have no origin short of the Apostles. They arose in the days of John the Baptist, and increased largely in the days of our blessed Saviour, when he showed himself unto Israel, and in the days of his Apostles, and have existed, under the severest oppressions, with intervals of prosperity, ever since.

But as to the Pædobaptists, their origin is at once traced to about the middle of the second century ; when the mystery of iniquity not only began to work, but, by its fermentation, had produced this error of fruitful evils, namely, that baptism was essential to salvation ; yes, that it was regeneration. Hence arose the necessity of baptizing children. Now comes forward Irenæus, and informs that the church had a *tradition* from the Apostles to give baptism to infants. We are told in the Appendix to Mosheim's Church History, that one of the remarkable things which took place in the second century was the baptizing of infants, it being never known before, as a Christian ordinance for them.

What a pity it is, that good men, who have renounced the error, which was, as church history informs us, the progenitor of infant baptism, should still retain its practical

tical and erroneous offspring, to the prejudice and mar-
ring of the church of God ! Not a single sect of the Pæ-
dobaptists can find its origin nearer to the Apostles than
the second century. We hence conclude, that their ori-
gin was there, and that they then and there arose in the
mystery which was then working. May the Father of
lights open the eyes of my brethren, that they may
come out of this, perhaps, the last thicket of gross error
and darkness.

I will now add—

V. The testimony which President Edwards bears in
favour of the Waldenses and other faithful ones, who
were scattered through all parts of Europe in the dark
ages of Popery. It is the following.

“In every age of this dark time, there appeared par-
ticular persons in all parts of Christendom, who bore a
testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the
church of Rome. There is no one age of antichrist, even
in the darkest time of all, but ecclesiastical historians
mention a great many by name, who manifested an ab-
horrence of the Pope and his idolatrous worship, and
plead for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship.
God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession
of witnesses, through the whole time, in Germany, France,
Britain, and other countries, as historians demonstrate,
and mention them by name, and give an account of the
testimony which they held. Many of them were private
persons, and many of them ministers, and some magis-
trates and persons of great distinction. And there were
numbers in every age, who were persecuted and put to
death for this testimony.

“Besides these particular persons, dispersed here and
there, there was a certain people, called the Waldenses,
who

who lived separate from all the rest of the world, who kept themselves pure, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome, through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five vallies of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France. The place where they lived was compassed with those exceeding high mountains, called the Alps, which were almost impassable. The passage over these mountainous, desert countries, was so difficult, that the vallies where this people dwelt were almost inaccessible. There this people lived for many ages, as it were alone, where, in a state of separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people; they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This place, in this desert, mountainous country, probably was the place, especially meant in the xii. chap. of Revelations, 6 verse, as the place prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of Antichrist.

"Some of the Popish writers themselves own that that people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of the Popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, the heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world. It is supposed, that this people first betook themselves to this desert, secret place among the mountains to hide themselves from the severity of the heathen persecutions, which were before Constantine the Great, and thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent, *Rev.* xii. 6; and so verse 14, And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of

the serpent. And the people being settled there, their posterity continued there from age to age afterwards, and being as it were by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated from the rest of the world, never partook of the overflowing corruption."

It is hoped that the reader will very carefully and candidly compare what is testified to us by three very learned men, Dr. Mosheim, Dr. Maclaine, and President Edwards. The testimony of the first is, that the Waldenses and many others who are *usually considered as witnesses of the truth* in the times of *universal darkness and superstition*, were essentially agreed with the Baptists of modern date, as to *principle and practice*, or as to the great maxim, whence flow all the peculiarities of that denomination. His testimony, in short, is this; the Hussites, the Wickliffites, the Petrobrusians, and the Waldenses, with other witnesses of the truth, scattered over Europe, in the dark ages of Popery, were essentially the same with the Baptists of later times; or that they all were what we call Baptists.

Dr. Maclaine testifies that the Waldenses flourished as early as the fifth century; yes, he informs us that some authors of note carry their antiquity up to the apostolic age.

President Edwards informs us that these Waldenses were the main body of the church, in the dark ages, and have been, together with their scattered brethren, the pure church of Jesus Christ, during the reign of Antichrist, and, of certain consequence, were successors of the pure church, from the days of Christ and his apostles.

The fair consequence of all is this, that the Baptists have been the uninterrupted church of our Lord from the apostles' day to ours.

I may, indeed, exclaim, What have I been believing, what have I been doing, with respect to the Baptists, all my days !

I know, and I confess, that the history of the church assures me, that the denomination of Christians to which I have belonged, and to which I do still visibly belong, came through the church of Rome, and was broken off from the mother of harlots, and it is not greatly to be wondered at, if all her filth should not be yet wiped away. At the same time, the same history assures me, that the Baptists never have submitted to her superstitions and filthy abominations.

I am somewhat surpris'd at my own long continued ignorance, and at the yet remaining darkness of my brethren, as to this matter. But above all, what shall I say at the hard opposition which some good men yet maintain against their brethren, the Baptists ? Surely, they might with great propriety be address'd in the words of Gamaliel ; " Take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do, as touching these men." If ye will not favour them, " refrain from them, and let them alone ; for, if their counsel or their work be of men, it will come to nought ; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

All the power, craft and cruelty of the wicked, though practis'd for nighly one thousand eight hundred years, have not been able to prevail against them. Surely the misguided zeal of good men will not.

In this short History of the Baptists, we see the continued accomplishment of one of Christ's promissory predictions, which is, *Matt. xvi. 18*. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. That denomination of Christians which are called Baptists, are the only known socie-

ty of professing Christians, against which Satan hath not prevailed, either in point of doctrine, or discipline, or both. This church, or old and inveterate heresy, as Satan would call it, he acknowledges, by the mouth of his servants, the Romanists, that he could never subdue. It is true, Satan hath joined many of his legions to it, as he did many false brethren to the disciples in the days of the Apostles. But he hath never, no, not for an hour, prevailed upon this ancient and primitive church to give up the doctrines of grace, or the administrations of the ordinances as Christ delivered them to his people. That which she first received, she still holds fast, and will. In all the history of the church, we read of no other body of professing Christians, after which Satan hath cast such a continual flood of waters; but hitherto the earth hath helped the woman, and the flood of persecution hath not prevailed. Satan's future efforts will be equally without effect.

My Fathers and Brethren in the ministry, and my brethren among the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, suffer a word of exhortation.

If you will not take up the cross, and so increase the number of Christ's continually preserved, yet always suffering, little flock, be ye careful how ye set yourselves in array against them. For more are they who are for them, than are those who are against them. With you is an arm of flesh, in all your oppositions, but with them is the Lord their God to help them, and he will help them; and by and by he will help them right early.

I shall be very pleasantly disappointed, should I not be, by many of you who are rulers in Israel, set at nought, for coming over to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

mighty. But, if I may but know the truth, and please the Lord, it is, with me, but a comparatively small thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment. I do, indeed, wish for the continuance of your good opinion and friendship, but I cannot possess them at the expense of truth. That I might testify unto you these things, I have risked every thing which the world calls valuable. I am now determined, and through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ I hope that to the end of my life I shall be determined, to venture every thing in defence of the doctrines and ordinances and church of the Son of God. I beseech all of you, who know the grace of our Lord Jesus, that ye do not as did many of the chief rulers in Israel. They believed on Christ, but did not confess him, because of the Pharisees, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men, more than the praise of God. *John xii. 42, 43.*

You have now heard me, and now know what I do. You will therefore now make up your judgment. But, I pray you, remember one thing: With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.

I am,

Reader,

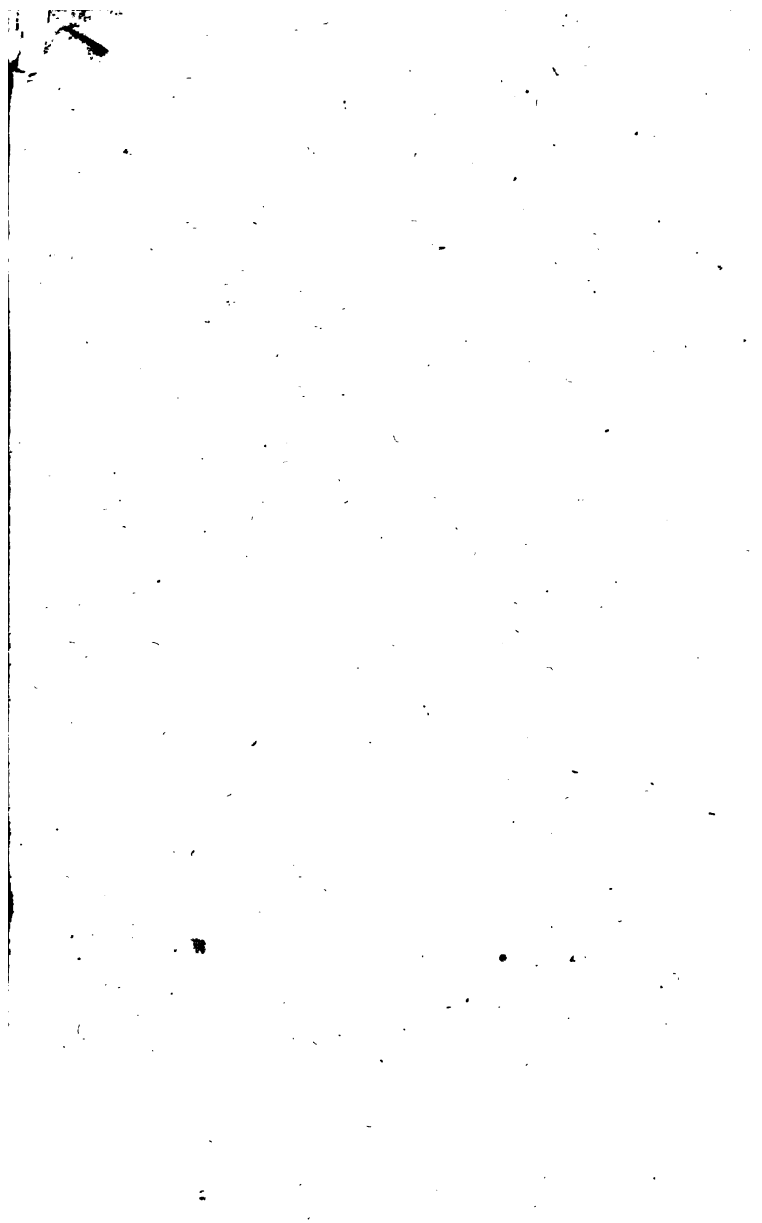
Thy Servant,

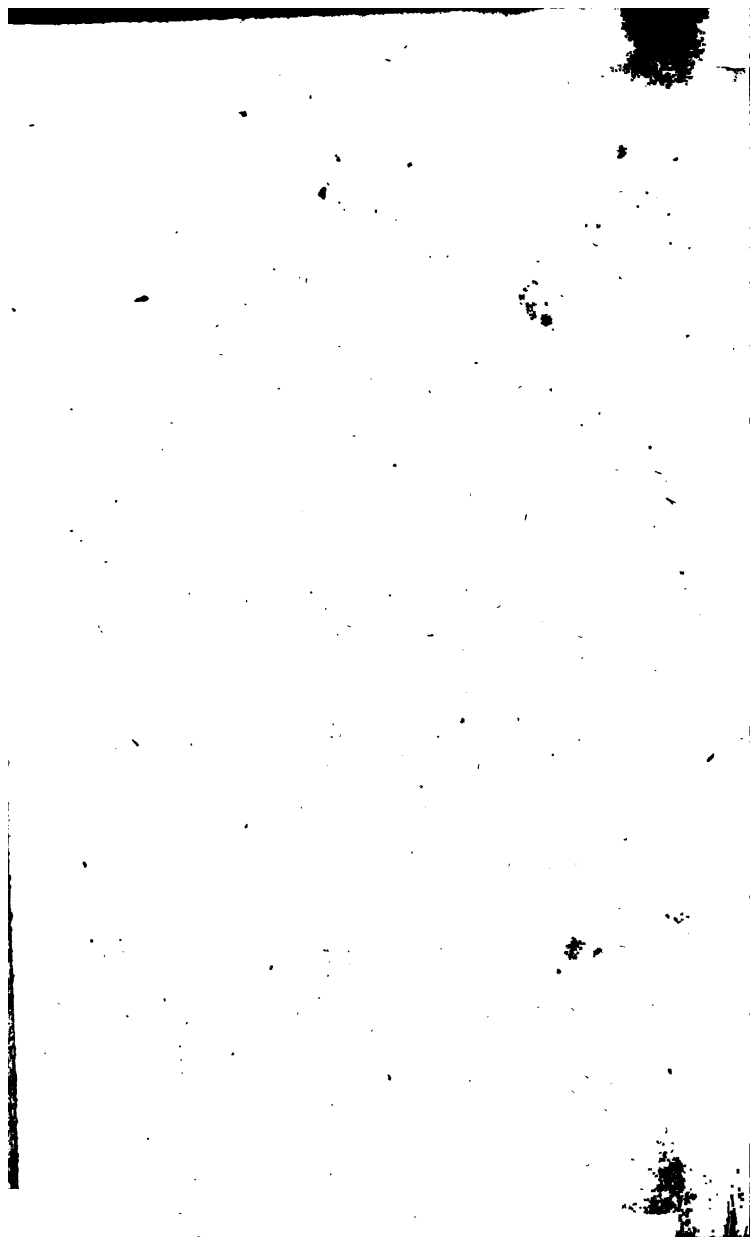
For the Gospel's Sake,

DANIEL MERRILL.

ERRATA.

Page 5, over the text, for "*Matthew xviii.*" read, "*Matthew xxviii.*"——P. 10, 4th line from the bottom, for "*lavacrum,*" read, "*lavacrum.*"——P. 11, 3d line from the top, for "*Baptistis,*" read, "*Baptistis.*"——P. 17, 14th line from the bottom, for "*apanipsato,*" read, "*apanipsato.*"——Ibid. 6th line from the bottom, for "*baptizōntai,*" read, "*baptizōntai.*"——P. 18, 4th line from the top, for "*epiplunan,*" read, "*apeplunan.*"——Ibid. 16th line from the top, for "*nipsato,*" read, "*enipsato.*"——Ibid. 8th line from the bottom, for "*nipo,*" read, "*nipso.*"——Ibid. 6th line from the bottom, for "*leloumenas,*" read, "*oleloumenas.*"——P. 20, 8th line from the top, for "*errantifnevei,*" read, "*errantifmenoi.*" This word, and "*rantizousa,* *errantise,* *rantifmou,* and *rantifmon,*" in the same page, to be spelt without the *h.*——Ibid. 4th line from the bottom, for "*emhammenon,*" read, "*ebammenon.*"





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